

**'ADVANCED TACTICS OF WORLD WAR TWO' (short: AT)  
PROUDLY PRESENTS:  
THE FREE BLITZKRIEG STAFF ACADEMY FOR PACIFISTS**

**READ ME to facilitate studying and reading:**

- **Bold text is the essential part of the text** such as a heading, or the essence of a bullet point or paragraph. The normal, plain black, text handles about examples being discussed (the first being the beginning of an action report of the '1941 Russia' scenario), or general remarks. **The blue text can be applied to the whole AT game – often the rules and mechanics of the game—** and **the red text consists of general remarks on tactics and strategy** based on logic and a bit of psychology, since we're dealing with human minds in these fields. The red text will be limited to 'historical warfare' here meaning the time up until the foundation of the United Nations in 1945, when everybody agreed with the postwar German dictum 'Nie wieder Faschismus, nie wieder Krieg' ('Never again fascism, never again war').

**Green text is things you are encouraged to try yourself at home.**

- **So you could read and study only the text in bold, and/or black, and/or blue, and/or red as independent parts**, according to your personal interest and availability of time.
- Words in *italics* are literally to be found on the appropriate screen of the game.
- Readers are supposed to have read the manual thoroughly and played some games: The black and blue text can't really be studied successfully without having a grasp of the rules, but of course you're free to try.

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**PART I: INTRODUCTION**

**Student participation:**

Please send feedback and the like, your winning move for the contest, banking accounts (also from your relatives, neighbors and friends), additional serious texts and information, graduation requests, and all other points of interest for the FBSAP to [atacademy@hotmail.com](mailto:atacademy@hotmail.com) and then we'll make a well-meant effort to process all this ~~garbage~~ information (no promises). Students who misbehave will be disciplined according to Martial Law (public hanging or neck shot after choice). We all sincerely hope you will enjoy the course! LET THE HUNT BEGIN!!!

**Warning of incorrect language:**

Since the English language didn't evolve enough to have convenient words describing somebody as either a female or a male we retorted to the commonly used incorrectness of writing for example 'him', if it could be a woman too, or sportsmanship, if it counts for women too, etcetera.

**Other mistakes:**

Remember all the time that the text could contain mistakes or errors and that it is not meant to be the final word on any matter discussed. It's just a momentary array of insights of some individuals.

In our opinion '**Advanced Tactics of World War II**' is an excellent game in its kind, the so called turn-based war games: this is **because of its incredible flexibility** which enables everyone willing to dive into it to compose and share with others a simulation of every known and fictional historical military conflict. Existing scenarios can also be adapted in every possible way to suit players, create balance and add all sorts of events. In that way **the game is very 'democratic' and open** in contrast with our societies in general. **The mechanics of the game reflect all aspects of historical warfare and the relations between them to make a complete, thorough and challenging simulation.**

The game seems quite difficult to master, especially since human intelligence is deteriorating for some time already (☺), so we chose the form of a replay, or action

report, as an example, because the rather abstract principles of the game are more easily understood in their actual implications and better remembered when 'seen' and made verifiable. To play along and so to learn to understand what we thought we understood you just have to open the '1941 Russia' scenario, that comes with the game when you buy it (it's in the map of WWII scenarios).

We invite everybody to partake in making the curriculum of this Academy better by asking questions, giving additional information, feedback, requests, writing articles yourself and maybe try out new things and communicate them (Dare! Write! Something!)

You're also encouraged to think about ways to make this gaming experience more fun and rewarding since the game allows for a lot more interactive fun than what we have used so far.

## PART II: THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLAYING GAMES

**In general playing and playing games serve three main purposes.** The two most common are the **training** of skills in a friendly surrounding, before going out to use those skills in real life, and the **bonding** that serves as a social 'glue' within groups of individuals, mostly of the same species, that occurs as a result of the interaction whilst playing. Those two reasons are for humans as well as animals natural drives to play. The third reason, which is valid for humans and probably other yet unknown species out there, is to play **to relax** from the stress of everyday life, as a so-called hobby.

**Skills that can be enhanced by playing AT are:**

- **logical and analytical thinking** (to turn the tide of ever-increasing stupidity caused by ruthless materialism in an infinite erratic quest to satisfy the senses also known as fun),
- **building strength of character** through, for example, playing a losing side and trying to make the best out of it, or refraining from impulsive actions, by first overseeing the whole to make the right assessment of what to do best,
- **flexibility of mind**, here the capacity to deal skillfully with a large number of continuously shifting, interrelated factors, on tactical and strategic level at the same time.
- **training of concentration**, since in many games people like to prefer the settings in such a way that mistakes can't be taken back, which means that tens of, often complex, decisions on different levels have to be made and then executed as hundreds of consecutive tiny, but significant, pushes on one of the many different buttons.

### **(Hidden advertisement for possible buyers of the game ☺:)**

Don't worry: your opponent is also human, or else neither the AI (the computer as player) can handle the avalanche of information that well and besides that, you can make it perform worse for convenience, and then finally there's a lot of shooting too, with noise (no flashes ☺), lists of killed enemies and all, if you're into that. The game is a real fun challenge to master and has much more worth than its price (about 9.7 times as much, according to an independent research).

Another positive effect of playing the game could be to sublimate latent aggressive and militaristic tendencies (that are probably stored in our genes or mental continuum) into a friendly game between people who share the same hobby (the so called 'armchair generals'), in order to turn a possible harmful drive into a positive outcome for all participants. The general human consensus at this stage of our development is that **war as a way to solve conflicts in real life is our most severe collective shortcoming** and needs to be avoided by all possible precautions measures and attitudes in order to avoid prolonged human suffering of the worst kind. Please bear this in mind.

## **PART III: A CRASH COURSE IN AT PBEM SPORTSMANSHIP**

### **SECTION i. GENERAL CIVILITY IN PBEM**

- **Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.** This is a good general rule to abide by, when dealing with other beings. It's been tested in the course of at least several millennia and it includes animals too, although their PBEM skills are low as is our general level of civilization.
- **It's good to consciously maintain a high level of respect and awareness in our contacts via the internet,** since, while playing PBEM games —like in emailing or chat box sessions— we cannot see, nor speak directly to each other and so it becomes easier to 'forget' to a certain extent that we're actually communicating with another human being like ourselves. This effect is caused by our innate primitivism that considers a human only a human when seen or heard directly.
- **Always try to communicate as clearly as possible and don't assume the other person knows** or understands what you do, because another effect of the lack of visual and audile reference material is that misunderstandings are more likely to occur.
- **Reread your mails and comments with this in mind, before actually sending them.**

- **Try to reason conflicts on so-called exploits, etcetera, out on the basis of common sense and logic and not on the short-term interest of your side in one particular game.** Although for example AT is very stable as program already and so these things are not likely to occur: if the exploit is going to be mend in a newer version of the game, you could play as if the newer version is already in effect.

## SECTION ii. AT PBEM CODE OF HONOR

- **Always give your opponent the advantage of doubt, before sorting out what actually went wrong.** This rule is important when anything goes wrong playing a PBEM game: don't let assumptions create a negative story in your mind.

- **Make it clear beforehand how often you can send a move and communicate delays beforehand.** Please, don't let somebody wait for a move, without him knowing what's going on at your side.

- **Always finish your games,** by either playing them out or giving up (surrendering): without communicating just stopping to send in turns is simply NOT DONE ☹ (Penalty: public hanging and neck shot at the same time, with no choice).

- **Usually it's OK to make the utmost advantage of the possibilities the rules of the game offer, but in the giving of names to units we should,** out of sportsmanship, **refrain from either changing the name of a unit more than once in a game, or giving all or several units the same name** to deceive the enemy. This unrealistic deceiving could be stopped by forbidding name changing of units in the program, but then we will be all stuck forever with those boring names like '123 Corps', or '456 Army'.

- **Possible PBEM cheat.** These can only happen when you have the *Anti PBEM Cheat* option switched on before starting a game.

**When you know that your opponent will be a given a 'possible cheat report',** because for example somebody switched off your computer during the course of your turn (there can be many reasons for possible cheat reports: almost as many as coming late for work), then let him know what is the reason, **be honest.** Honesty always pays off in the long run, although sometimes it might seem 'easier' simply not to mention something that puts you in a possible funny light.

**Ask for an explanation when you get a 'possible cheat report' in your opponent's turn** and your opponent didn't explain this himself. Simply believe him on his word, or ask for more information, and when there's another possible cheat report, firmly ask him to do everything possible so you won't get these reports anymore in the game. When it happens for the third time, you could communicate that when it happens one more time you will report him to cheat. To report this will be only

possible in a ladder game (where you will need a 'challenge' before you can start one). If you report your opponent as 'cheater' then the 'accused' will get a '1' in his 'cheat record', next time a '2', etc. This is to be seen by everyone, together with his ranking.

So **three warnings are reasonable and fair before marking someone to cheat.**

Be creative with the *Anti PBEM Cheat* option: **some people agree beforehand that once every so much turns you can redo a move** (against real stupid moves caused by accidentally pushing a wrong button in a critical situation that would spoil a game, for example) Be aware that such agreements can and may be used by players to do a peek move. A peek move is a move which you cancel afterwards, by reopening the same turn and then sending that second move, but you use the information gathered in the canceled move by finding out where enemy units are or by doing test attacks.

- **In the same way, in a ladder game, you can go about when a player doesn't communicate anymore** (no moves and no messages being sent to you anymore). **Firstly: ask for an explanation.** Sometimes moves don't arrive for example, due to technical problems. **Secondly: ask for a message.** **Thirdly: declare** that after so and so much time **you will report yourself the winner** as if the other had surrendered, or as if you both actually did agree on a draw, depending on your mood and the last position you had in the game. **Fourthly: do as you intended,** after the elapsed time. **A ladder game that didn't really start** (meaning: no communication, no first move being send and no answers after your enquiries) **should be reported as a 0-0** (draw) after some time.

- **If you have good reason** (by looking at ranking differences or the other being a newbie for example) **to believe that you're much better in playing AT than your opponent, it's good to first play a friendly game together,** with maybe some explanations and feedback offered in an encouraging manner by the more experienced player, before actually deciding to play a ladder game together. This is to help prevent newcomers from dropping out by becoming too demoralized. In friendly scenario games you can also give yourself a 'handicap' by giving the other a bonus by putting one or more of the settings in his advantage.

- **The educating of each other as players in play is an important and real fun aspect in discovering the possibilities of AT.** Friendly games are the perfect setting for teaching and giving feedback on somebody's play, but if you're very friendly you can do that also in a ladder game. Often it's the quickest way to upgrade your ability in game play, so don't be hesitant to give information or to ask for it. Don't 'sit' on specific information, by considering it yours and not sharing it, if others ask for it, but maintain the open character of the game in the interaction between players too and remember there are no real secrets in the game: it's all a question of logic.

**Don't give away your specific tactics and strategy during a game, but you could do so after finishing it. This way you will force yourself to remain flexible and come up all the time with new tactics and strategies.**

- **Be sportive and gallant**, because it will make you feel content and good about what you're doing and it will create a nice atmosphere in your games. Real (staff) officers should be gallant, as in the ideal of the Noble Knight in medieval times. For example, if somebody clearly doesn't know a rule (like a specific rule for a scenario) or makes the same terrible mistake several times you could point gently to it. If you do that more often during a game, ask if the other appreciates this pointing out, because some people prefer just to sort things out by themselves, not distracted by remarks of a seemingly doubtful nature.

- **Remember it's just a game**: go for the friendly interacting and continuous learning experience, rather than wasting your time in being secretive, possessive and rigid on scoring points for yourself, although some of us did notice that competitive play is more exciting.

## **PART IV: GENERAL REMARKS ON STRATEGY**

### **SECTION i. THE OFFENSIVE DOCTRINE**

Because of the following reasons it's generally preferable to take the initiative when involved in a military conflict between roughly equal sides:

- As attacker you can decide where to attack or to invade with concentrated strength, while as defender you have to spread your forces in order to defend the vital parts of your territory.
- As attacker you can have a certain surprise effect with your first blow, which can be made stronger by a quick advance. A very quick advance can lead to demoralization and even panic in the enemy camp.
- The initial destruction of cities and infrastructure will be mostly on enemy terrain, when invading another country. An advance into enemy terrain can also disrupt the lines of communication and supply.

#### **Catching the Enemy Unprepared by the Unexpected as a Way to Victory:**

Quite a few military successes were caused by 'limited' thinking of the losing party: often when a majority of people starts to believe something with good reason, or just out of habit, tradition, or lack of imagination, they will be inclined to continue to believe in their 'truth' even if circumstances or possibilities have changed.

This process is caused by an ingrained sheep like (or sleeplike) tendency of the mind to just go along trodden paths.

In the military this could mean that if one side believed for example one road of advance to be impossible, the enemy actually taking that road would have a disastrous psychological effect, maybe even resulting in panicking, because a seemingly safe situation turned out to harbor the biggest danger.

So, in an interesting paradoxical way: **just because the more something is believed to be 'true' the more 'false' it actually can become.**

An example is the quick breakthrough from the Germans in the Ardennes whereby the bulk of the Allied army became trapped inside Belgium in 1940 in a couple of weeks: the Allied staff didn't think such a move could be possible, maybe also still living in their mind in a basically non-mechanized era, military spoken.

So, always **make an effort to find out something new**, using the latest know-how, or just simply a different way of looking at it, or a trick. **Finding out such things is easier when you have a flexible and open mind, able and willing to look at everything afresh when needed.**

## SECTION ii. THE GENERAL PLANNING OF AN OFFENSIVE CAMPAIGN

- **First you have to set your goals and the rough time schedule in which you want to achieve them.**
  - **According to the type and amount of expected resistance you plot your different units in the task groups formed to reach every goal.**
  - **According to (unexpected) events**, such as enemy breakthroughs; stiffer than expected resistance; ability of the opponent's command; knowledge of his plans; amount of his reserves and production, **you have to allot mobile units**, or units that are easily to be displaced **at central places behind the front**, so they can quickly reach any possible place they're required.
- A strong air force can usually take a big part of this role, because of their high speed and long range.

## SECTION iii. REMARKS ON DEFENSIVE CAMPAIGNS

- **When planning defensive lines and positions you have to include the time needed to bring your positions up to strength, you have to choose the best place for them** by strategically choosing which part of your infrastructure you will have to defend strongest and tactically using terrain and other factors to actually do so. Together with those two factors **you'll also have to decide or acknowledge what your defense will consist of** by means of an assessment of your standing army with its supplies and arms, a mobilization of new troops and a conversion of production.

- Another part of the defensive campaign is the array of delaying tactics to be employed, like the Tactic of Scorched Earth, roadblocks, feigning attacks and any other possible means.
- **'The best defense is the attack'**. The Offensive Doctrine in defense is the counterattack which can range from local attacks to close gaps in the lines, destroy bridgeheads and retake key positions to grand scale counteroffensives on some or all parts of the front.

## PART V: MAIN POINTS OF THE AT GAME'S TACTICS AND STRATEGY, SHORT: 'THE KEY POINTS'

### SECTION i: Before beginning an AT game:

- **With the not random scenarios**, which have all fixed starting positions for the units, it's a good idea to **have a thorough look at the whereabouts and strength of the opponent's positions**. This you do by opening the scenario with the option 'Fog of War' turned off. When you are really going to start you reopen the same scenario with 'Fog of War' turned on (most people prefer to play with fog of war on).
- You can have the two identical games open (the one with fog of war and the one without) for easy reference in the first couple of turns (after that enemy units can have moved too far from their original position, or have changed in composition or strength).
- **The first player can 'restart' the first turn as often as he wants**, before sending it to his opponent. This is a strong advantage of being the first player.

### SECTION ii. THE THREE KEY CONCEPTS FOR WINNING A GAME AS ATTACKING SIDE IN AT

Notes: in the next list words in *italics* can be found somewhere on the computer screen when you have selected a unit in a game.

Points and their implications and workout will overlap each other.

- **strength of attack**, which includes
  - 1) **Combined arms attacks**, meaning land or sea attacks preceded by bombardments of any or all sorts (shore, artillery or dive-bombing).
  - 2) **Nearness of a headquarter unit** (short: HQ) maximum three hexes distance for 100% HQ power, *HqPw*, for your attacking units.
  - 3) **Full staff bonus** by having *staf* at a minimum of 100% for attacking units.
  - 4) **Maximum readiness**, *Rd*, for your attacking units.

5) **Maximum action points**,  $Ap$ , for your attacking units at the time of attack to ensure a maximum amount of attacking rounds they can fight.

6) **Using a maximum amount of hexes to attack from** for the surrounding bonus.

7) **Taking account of terrain** so as not to waste your attacking power, like to attack a fortification with fighters.

8) **Taking account of favorite targets** to use your different arms most effectively.

9) **Attacking in waves** to avoid crowding penalty and to conquer key hexes

10) **High (staff) experience and unit morale**,  $Xp$  and  $Mo$ , are to be kept by some units to be able to use them as 'Stosstruppen' (elite troops for frontal assaults), again to conquer key points such as cities, crossroads, fortifications on a main road and the like.

11) **Surprise attacks** by directing considerable production to a new HQ on a part of the front where the enemy knows or suspects you have only few units. Newly produced units can directly attack in that way, with no time or readiness loss, remaining in their HQ until after the attacks the turn of their arrival in their HQ. If you mechanize, using *wheeled or tracked* movement, such a HQ, those attacks can even be more awesome and surprising.

12) **Putting the percentage of loss**,  $Loss\%$ , of attacking units at 100% instead of their default setting of 50%, whereby they will go on fighting longer before actually retreating because of losses and retreat in combat.

- **rapid advance**, which includes:

13) **Taking account of terrain** so as not to waste your action points.

14) **Attacking with units behind the front** so some mobile units on the front with maximum action points (short: AP) can advance maximally into enemy terrain

15) **Building roads** ahead of your advancing mobile units if possible.

16) **Transfers to furthest hexes conquered into enemy territory**, to possibly conquer more hexes for your spearheads to advance on, just by transferring.

17) **Quick motorization** also by transferring trucks from HQs to frontline troops, or **use of horses**.

18) **Attacking and advancing 'deep' instead of 'wide' by means of breakthrough and exploitation** to encircle groups of units and also to be able to have a much larger field of potential attack and following breakthroughs, thereby driving the line-building defender to despair and into easy to isolate strongpoints, such as cities and production centers.

19) **Direct production to frontline HQs** to use the 'movement' of production as much as possible.

20) **Use paratroopers** to make hexes friendly by dropping them one turn before and ahead of your advancing troops.

21) Use **combination landings** not to just land on a port from sea, but also to continue to advance inland with a second landing party carrying troops in a different way

- **overall flexibility**, which is the broadest principle and includes flexibility in:

22) **Strategy and tactics** to adapt to changing situations.

23) **Unit size and**

24) **Amount of units**: create small units to perform small necessary chores, like (aerial) reconnaissance, sea patrol, to confuse the enemy of your whereabouts, conquering hexes, defense against paratroopers, partisans and small landings all behind your lines, mopping up encircled units and more... **People often have too few units** thereby losing lots of APs and striking force in general. With more, and consequently smaller, units it's easier to get surrounding bonuses in attacks, as just one more of the many examples.

25) **Headquarter alignment**, meaning how the tree of the HQs is formed. This you can use for example to drain a HQ that has lots of supply inside.

26) **Production**, in order to build what you need to counter specific enemy strength, for example.

27) **Building more HQs**, to maintain high staff experience, *Xp*, in existing frontline HQs while at the same time needing to expand your army; or to be able to conduct surprise attacks or to be able to transfer supplies out of a HQ in order to be able to let it move at normal speed instead of at *immobile* speed. Another reason to build an extra HQ could be that you will use that HQ to stockpile supply in the face of an encirclement. There are more reasons to build more HQs.

28) **Unit composition**. One example: tanks need strong infantry support, because by themselves they're quite vulnerable even when fighting against infantry only. You can also change from *wheeled* movement to *foot* by transferring trucks and the like out of a unit so the subunits on foot can cross a river.

29) **Transferring**, because, for example, transferring can be a way to strengthen readiness in existing units, but also to weaken readiness, depending on the situation.

30) **Route of advance**, mainly by building roads around (strong) enemy positions in order to reduce losses; to save time and to force the enemy to retreat out of his fortifications or else be encircled. Building roads around the enemy can also be a means to attack easier from more sides to get a higher surrounding bonus.

## SECTION iii. MAIN POINTS OF DEFENSE IN AT

The following points will be numbered as a continuation of the points of attack and will be only mentioned when bringing in something new for defense. So points like 'taking account of terrain' will not be repeated here again.

- 31) **Flexible defense** in order to not become encircled and to save the experienced troops for creating a new line for example.
- 32) **Mounted troops** are generally good for defense.
- 33) **Mobile reserves** to conduct counteroffensives against for example artillery
- 34) **Use fighters within interception range as umbrella for your heavy equipment** (tanks and artillery) to protect them against dive-bombers. Use your dive-bombers to attack heavy equipment that is not under such an umbrella. Check the amount of enemy flak formations and interceptors with a single fighter on a reconnaissance mission. Note that the information gotten in an attack and on a recon mission is accurate. Information on the content of a hex by means of *Rec* is often distorted. Only when the number next to *Rec* (from reconnaissance) is green it is completely accurate.
- 35) **Protect yourself against landings, partisans and paratroops:** keep some units in production centers, bridgeheads, crucial rivercrossings and harbors if they're in reach of such attacks.
- 36) **Plan your defense in advance** so your troops will have some experience and higher entrenchment when the attacker has reached your line.
- 37) **In general don't defend to tight on the attacker**, because in that way he'll be able to use all his *AP* directly against your line and probably have more *AP* left to exploit the holes he made in your line.
- 38) **Use your engineers to blow bridges and build fortifications** at strategic points
- 39) **Conduct counterattacks** to slow down enemy advance
- 40) **Organize your defense in depth**, especially to slow down the advance of wheeled and tracked units by, for example, roadblocks (out of reach of enemy front line troops on foot or mounted).
- 41) **Dispersion of armor and other heavy weapons in the face of air superiority.**
- 42) **Gain air or naval superiority in a specific area of the front** to successfully conduct counteroffensives or to maintain positions. For England in WW II this was crucial. On the Eastern Front the Russians can well use this strategy.
- 43) **more points...** Please let us know if you discovered new aspects of key points.

All these points will be discussed at some length later in the text, with the examples. For the moment you only have to memorize all those points with their numerical identity for easy reference ☺. Later we shall be referring to, for example, 'AT key point 11'.

We have noticed that people discuss a lot about the characteristics of the different weapons and comparing them: we don't feel this information is crucial. Really to master the key points in correct application is much more decisive to win a game, than to know for example that a medium tank II is stronger than a light tank III.

## **PART VI: ACTION REPORT ONE: AXIS VERSUS THE SOVIET UNION, THE '1941 RUSSIA' SCENARIO**

This part was written while using version 1.15 of the game and we begun writing this in May 2008 using that version of the 1941 scenario.

This game starts with Germany and its allies invading the Soviet Union on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 1941.

### **SECTION i. BEFORE THE START OF THE 1941 RUSSIA SCENARIO**

You will probably get the most out of studying this material if you play along. Since your combat outcomes will differ from the example we play and this might cause too much discrepancies between your game and the example played, you can download following moves from the website.

Proceed as follows: open the game; click on '*Load Scenario*'; open the map 'WWII', open the file 'Russia 1941'. Put the settings, for easy reference, as follows: 'Fog of War': off. If you want you can put Leave all the rest as it is. You will now see all units all the time, so we can see what we are talking about.

Read the briefing of the scenario, if you're not yet familiar with it. The implications of the information in the briefings are important. [Note that not all briefings are complete in the sense that some don't give all the extra rules specific for the scenario.](#) We start the game in the first turn playing Axis, or Germany.

#### **Grand strategy of the German side:**

The main goals of Germany are the big production centers, like Murmansk, Moscow, the Siberian production centers and Grozny/Baku, since those centers produce five times as much as the other centers. The other centers should be 'picked' on the way to the big production centers.

#### **Refining the grand strategy: 'On to Moscow!'**

Of all big production centers we will focus on Moscow:

- it is nearest,
- it is easier to surround,

- it has the central position, so after taking Moscow it is possible to cut the country in two: then after that it is to focus first on the weaker side and then finishing off the stronger side
- it has a bigger psychological value, even in a simulation,
- somebody already put the strongest units opposite it

Disadvantages are

- lots of natural and man-made obstacles in the vicinity
- a large Soviet HQ inside it

### **Tactical considerations of the German side**

Note that the Soviet units have no supply whatsoever on them. Of the frontline HQs only Leningrad does have a stock of supply. This means concretely that **when such a unit with no supply, is out of supply, by being cut off from its HQ at the start of its turn, it will not be able to move at all, not even the airplanes!**

You should know that friendly ports (even without units) can give supply to units in ports and coastal hexes on the same body of water in this scenario as a special rule.

### **There are two ways to cut off units directly from their HQ:**

- by encircling them with friendly hexes so supplies from their HQ can't reach them overland
- more drastically and effectively: by wiping out their HQ completely.

### **Wiping out an enemy HQ has three advantages:**

- you don't have to actually move around their subordinate units in order to cut those off for receiving supply their next turn,
- their units will not only get no supply the next turn, but will also suffer a 75% loss in readiness
- any production directed to a destroyed HQ will be lost too.

So we will surely look into the destruction of complete enemy HQs later. **If you want you can already move ahead and figure out for yourself which Soviet HQs can effectively be taken this first turn.**

As ambitious —because staying under heavy time pressure— German side we will try to immobilize or destroy all Soviet troops within four hexes of any German unit, with the exception of units of the Leningrad Front, since those can't be put out of supply.

The relative weakest German group seems to be that of HQ Rumania: it also has to be able to defend one of the two main German production centers and it is far from the strategic reserves in the OKH. We have to consider that well when directing production at the end of the turn.

### **Marching orders with time schedule for the different HQs**

- HQ Finland: Leningrad and then Moscow if not yet conquered, the hex called Murmansk, or the Siberian Production centers as a second choice
- AG North: Riga in turn two and then continue as HQ Finland
- AG Center: Minsk in turn two and then Moscow before the winter and then holidays.
- AG South: Kiev in turn three and then Kharkov and then Stalingrad and then Grozny/Baku. Between Kiev, Kharkov and Stalingrad it could also bend northward to help conquer Moscow.
- HQ Rumania: Sevastopol in turn four and then Maikop and then Grozny/Baku.

### **What to research?**

This is actually a whole chapter, but for now we shall discuss only the German side in our game. We want to limit our research to 160 points out of the 200 available, because we need quite a lot to build extra HQs and formations to speed up our advance. We upgrade to Rifle/SMG II and Artillery II, since the common infantry is the backbone of the army and artillery will be used to crack enemy strongpoints. Since our German rifle units start with an experience of 50% instead of 0, we chose to protect their relative high experience by upgrading them. Upgrading divebombers is also very tempting, because it makes them 50% stronger, but that will be next one as this alone will cost 120PP.

Note: in this scenario you will sometimes get a bonus of 100PP to buy upgrades with.

## **SECTION ii. TURN 1 (JUNE 22 1941) HQ FINLAND AND HQ GERMAN NAVY AND THEIR UNITS**

### **Tactical considerations of the Leningrad front:**

Note that, besides the Soviets (hereafter: 'Russians') having only 25% readiness, their level of entrenchment is only 51 in the Mannerheim line. So, it's kind of 'now or never' to attack this line: waiting or postponing will let the Russians gain incredibly in strength just by their augmenting readiness and entrenchment level with the units already in the line.

The Russians have a considerable amount of tanks, planes and artillery on and near the site, so it can be dangerous to expose yourself by attacking strongly, but the strength of immediate Russian counterattacks could be tested beforehand as well as the rate of success of 'our own' troops by using the *Combat Sim* option found at *System Options (Prefs Saves, Quit)* on the game screen ☺.

### **Using the Combat Simulation Option (*Combat Sim*)**

Only during every first turn of every game you can switch the *Combat Sim* option on, for one or more attacks (you can switch the option on and off during the first turn as

many times as you want). Note that this is an option to test: it gives the average outcome of 200 identical attacks: the outcome of attacks is partly randomized; meaning some luck or unpredictability is involved. The attacks made by combat simulation are not executed: for that you'll have to switch the option off again.

**The first turn is very important for the course of the game and in AT you have the possibility to thoroughly test it with this option.** So you have the possibility as first player to start the game as often as you want (as described in part V, section i) before sending an 'edition' you're satisfied about to your opponent.

Maybe funny to say, but don't use a first move that is protected against PBEM cheats more than one time: the second time you'll use the same move as first player your new opponent will get possible cheat messages every turn!

### How to Play Along

We shall use a system whereby the moves and other actions are written out, because for a detailed explanation with AT replay, such as we are doing here, it's just not enough to look at maps with flags and arrows.

Unfortunately it's easiest if you print out the parts with notifications. Sorry for the inconvenience and waste of paper. Victor promised to look at a sort of log for analysis (like the history record we have in the game).

Before every part of replay we shall give you little maps, 'before and after treatment' with the upper units of every hex, cut out of the appropriate screenshots.



Figure 1. Start of turn 1: Finland and the Baltic Fleet



Figure 2. End of German turn 1: Finland and the Baltic Fleet.

### Legend of Notification

The symbols in the legend follow the short keys of the game

[ [ ] ]	=	part of the text with notification inside
1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , etc.	=	1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> Corps or Army
Abc	=	first three letters of a unit
HQAbc	=	HQ with the first three letters of its name
xx, xx	=	hex coordinates (sometimes city names are used)
A	=	is attacking to
B	=	is bombarding to
H	=	assigning to another HQ
M	=	is moving to
NF X <sup>th</sup> xx, xx	=	a new formation, the X <sup>th</sup> Corps/Army is created on hex = xx, xx
NHQAbc xx, xx	=	a new HQ named Abc is created on hex xx, xx
P	=	set production for a location
R	=	road and bridge construction
S	=	is being strategically transferred to
T	=	is being transferred to
Z	=	is doing an air strike on
WITH HQAbc	=	HQ Abc giving land cap or sea cap

1xEng, 2xLtT, etc.	=	1 engineer subunit, 2 Light Tank subunits, etc.
( + + + )	=	units, or subunits in brackets perform an action together.
/	=	a new action performed by the same unit as the previous action.
///	=	a new action

### Examples of notification:

[[33,33 5<sup>th</sup> T (5xEng + 3xInf) Kiev 8<sup>th</sup>]] means: The 5<sup>th</sup> Corps/Army situated in hex 33,33 transfers 5 Engineers and 3 Infantry subunits to the 8<sup>th</sup> Corps/Army located in Kiev.

[[Sevastopol 3<sup>rd</sup> S WITH HQAGN 24,33]] means: The 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps/Army in Sevastopol is being strategically transferred with the land cap of the headquarter of Army Group North to hex 24,33.

If you're not asleep yet we will now begin.

We'll start with a practical example of [key point 27](#), which is about creating more HQs in order to be more mobile for example. Look at the jerry can symbol in the information on HQ Finland in Helsinki: note that with this *Immobilized* status this HQ can only move a maximum of 2 hexes ☹. What we want to do is bring this HQ closer to the front to give the units that are going to conquer the Mannerheim Line their very important combat bonus. A bit later we will discover to our amazement and wonder that this is the key to conquer this line at this junction of time!

Create a new HQ in Helsinki and call it Helsinki with as its mother HQ, HQ German Navy. Change the 'mother' or 'parent' of HQ Finland to this new HQ Helsinki. In that way you will have a sure connection from the front near Leningrad all the way to the OKH, to guarantee a free flow of future supplies and production. In notification:

[[ NHQ HQHelsinki Helsinki /// HQHel H HQNav /// HQFin H HQHel ]]

What usually bogs down HQs is loads of supply: here the weight (*Wgt*) of HQ Finland is 645, or the weight of 645 rifle subunits! So transfer all the supply out to HQ Helsinki.

[[ HQFin T 4707xSupply HQHel ]]

Now note that HQ Finland is now on *foot*. Still not quick enough, because we want it to go even closer to the front so that if we direct the production of artillery for bombardment to it, that brand new artillery could give its full 100 AP value to bombard Leningrad already next turn, just while it is still in its mother HQ! Please read and follow the notification, since it's no use to use both notification and written text to define the same action, all the time, my dears.

[[ 53<sup>rd</sup> M 14,1 /// NF 93<sup>rd</sup> 14,1 /// 93<sup>rd</sup> H HQFin /// HQFin T 5xFla 93<sup>rd</sup> ]]

Now finally HQ Finland can and will move wheeled! And the other land units will take their positions. The 52<sup>nd</sup> Corps will be motorized just like that by the trucks from HQ Finland.

The Baltic Fleet will steam up to Leningrad, because that's her price and that's where the action will be, also fleet wise. **The fleet remains two hexes from the coast, thereby always unspotted by land units.**

Note the defense that is sent to Helsinki according to **key point 35, which states that you shouldn't leave production centers and harbors unattended.** Russia will not be able to invade Helsinki directly by sea and or air the next three turns, so strictly spoken we wouldn't have to defend Helsinki the first two turns and probably even longer. The thing is that, because of the heat of the coming battles, we could easily forget or neglect to guard our cities. Although we will play very aggressive, at the same time we shouldn't underestimate the abilities of our adversary at any time, nor overestimate our own fortune in battle.

First attack of this game is the Finnish Air force strafing the 76<sup>th</sup> Army near Riga. Not to try in vain to destroy its artillery, but to partly slow down the same artillery so they won't escape the advancing troops of AG North, as strafing is effective against horses. With the Finnish Air force you could also strafe (*airstrike* for fighters) hex 15,1, a fortification hex. **'Do' the two (or more, after choice) possible air attacks with the fighters of the Finnish Air Force with the Combat Simulation Option on and compare the outcomes and effects and realize the effect of terrain on aerial attacks.**

[[ Konigsberg HQNav T 1xSta HQHel /// 52<sup>nd</sup> M 11,0 /// HQFin T 9xEng HQHel / M 14,1 / T 2xTru 52<sup>nd</sup> /// 54<sup>th</sup> M 15,0 /// Bal M 5,3 /// FAF Z 7,10 ]]

Now use the CSO to proof the very important **key point 2**, which encourages you to attack within full HQ power (maximum three hexes distance between an attacking ground unit and its mother). So put the Combat Simulation Option (CSO) on and then attack Mannerheim Line hex 15,1 with the 53<sup>rd</sup> and the 54<sup>th</sup> Corps. You can put your loss percentage (*Loss%*) at 100%, (**key point 12**) since you do want to conquer this last hex before Leningrad, one of the six cities you need to control in order to win the game. Anyway: losses won't be that bad. More importantly, note that about 195 out of 200 attacks will be successful, meaning you actually conquering that hex. OK, now save this game and reopen the same scenario for the final test: now leave HQ Finland brooding in Helsinki and do, again with CSO put on, the same attack from two hexes on hex 15,1 with the 53<sup>rd</sup> and 54<sup>th</sup> Corps: now you will only conquer the hex about 73 times out of 200!!! So in this case, as in many others, **the success of your attacks will depend for a large part on the proximity of the mother HQ with her front troops.** By consequently following this golden rule of HQ proximity for ground troops you will considerably improve your ability to win a game. There are two butts:

Frontline HQs are more vulnerable to enemy attacks and you will also need more HQs

As you might know, a unit will not get any HQ bonus while inside its HQ, so **as a golden rule we always transfer subunits near the front out of their HQ**. This bonus has more positive effect on the subunit's combat performance than the negative effect caused by the loss of 25% readiness by the transfer, which only lasts the next enemy turn.

[[ (53<sup>rd</sup> + 54<sup>th</sup>) A 15,1 / M 15,1 /// HQFin T (9xSmg + 12xMac) 53<sup>rd</sup> ]]

We didn't transfer the engineers out of the HQ, to preserve their engineer points (*Ep*). Now you might think that the new position is dangerous, without the flank of the HQ covered. **Try, if you want, with the Russians to do some serious damage on the exposed units (HQ Finland, 53<sup>rd</sup> Army, 54<sup>th</sup> Army)**. You can send your move with comment to the email address if it is successful in that.

Then finally we will organize our production for Finland: we'll direct the production of Konigsberg and Helsinki in the form of 4 artillery II to HQ Finland. Of course, just in choosing types and amounts of production there are myriads of possibilities, depending on your strategy. This is just one of the options, based on a quick, but not all-out attack, directly on Leningrad.

[[ Helsinki P (2xArtII + 9xSMGII) /// Konigsberg H HQFin / P (2xArtII + 9xSMGII)

We chose SMG, because they fight 50% better than rifle subunits, when attacking cities. After the artillery has fired, next turn, we transfer them out, together with some or all engineers in order to move wheeled to Leningrad, to attack it.

**Your 'homework assignment' is to find out the best move for HQ Rumania and its units, only 13 in total. Think about our goal to immobilize or destroy all units within 4 hexes of the German units. Make sure also to secure the two river crossings by occupying the other side. Send your move to [atacademy@hotmail.com](mailto:atacademy@hotmail.com)** The best move will be the winner in our first Best Move Contest.

Here the first part of the AT Academy ends.