

NO RETREAT! Play Notes by Carl Paradis

German OKWH Directives (or how to avoid Götterdämmerung):

- Concentrate your troops and attack at high odds, thus limiting the losses you'll take, especially in 1941 when you get almost no replacements.
- "Counterblow Attacks" are your friend, especially early in the game when you want to advance faster: if you have a stack of units next to a Soviet city, this could be a very effective way of gaining some ground in the opponent's turn if he decides to stand and fight unsupported.
- At every opportunity, surround Soviets and let them die "Out of Supply", this will save German blood, and give you the precious VPs that you need to achieve a "Sudden Death" victory. Plus makes the enemy pay double to replace the lost armies.
- Have a goal, don't just run away chasing after Soviets to blast them frontally. You can be sure that they will rebuilt those troops, and fast. While you take hard to replace losses.
- Always keep some units in the Rail Movement Box to reinforce areas where you are making progress.
- Your Army will almost inevitably dwindle in quality (as it costs double to flip units to full strength). So know when to cut your losses and switch to the defensive if outright victory seems out of sight.
- When everything crumbles away in 1944, do remember that every unit in USSR proper at the end of the game is one VP less for the enemy. So there is still hope for German arms. For example, pockets of troops along the Baltic coast are in supply (by sea), and can be useful to that purpose, diverting Soviet resources, and can hold out indefinitely (as historically happened).

The German War Years in review:

1941: You are the unstoppable Germanic Monster Blitzkrieg Army, all fear and tremble before you! So, you can go everywhere you wish, BUT you cannot be everywhere at once... What is an aspiring world conqueror to do? An interesting option is the initial historical OKHW plan: Going full tilt for Leningrad and Moscow, coupled with a steady advance in the south, aimed at capturing Kiev, Odessa and Dnepropetrovsk. But beware of the difficult northern terrain; your Panzers might very well end up bogged-down in the woods and swamps. You don't want another war of attrition, right?

1942: If you have weathered the Soviet winter counter-offensive and hold two Objectives, now is the time to try to finish them off before their Army starts improving too much. If you don't have the Objectives, then your best bet is probably going south, trying to grab as many cities as possible, surrounding troops on the way, to get the biggest "High Tide" VP score before the VP flip on turn 11. Do watch out your losses, they can pile up very fast when you are fighting an ever-improving Russian Army, and of course watch your flanks, and those unreliable Axis Allies.

1943: If the game is still on, the Tide of War is probably starting to turn against you. Gone is "Drand Nach Osten!" (Drive towards the East!) It's "Na Berlin!" (On to Berlin!) time now. You will lose a lot of your nice attack Event Cards, in exchange getting mostly lame defensive cards. Gone is the possibility of a "Sudden Death" victory, but make no mistake, your Army is still powerful, and you get the useful Elite Panzer unit to spearhead those last big offensives. So don't be afraid to counter-attack over-extended Soviets, but be ever watchful of being attritioned to death! Mud weather is a good time to dress up your line and replace some losses. If you are still in a good map position, an "Objective Victory" might even be a possibility!

1944: Well, the writing is on the wall (The Berlin walls!). You're probably now facing a huge, angry, and dangerous Red Army; very capable of inflicting the disastrous reverses you made it suffer in 1941/42. Please, try not to get your units surrounded (this could be difficult to do), hold Konigsberg at all costs, and keep the most possible German troops in USSR proper until the end. If things really went bad south and you lost Rumania, and a lot of troops, then it's maybe time to look for a nice farm in Argentine where to retire...

Soviet STAVKA Directives (or how to win the Great Patriotic War):

- Most of the time you will be able to build back you Army each and every turn, just don't get units killed while "Out of Supply" or over-extend yourself making too many attacks too early in the game, as you initially have barely enough to cover the whole front. Leningrad with a fortress is a very good anchoring point, don't lose it!
- Clear terrain is almost impossible to defend with regular infantry against a competent German Player, so be aware that you'll most certainly get your line breached.
- You have to start wearing down the Germans as soon as possible. The "EX" combat result is your friend. But don't overdo it and create holes in your lines! Small-scale counter-attacks are the name of the game early on.
- "Counterblow Attacks" can be very effective in the first winter, where you have lots of "Shock" markers to use; plus lost troops will be rebuilt right away in your turn!
- ALWAYS keep at minimum one unit in the Rail Movement Box if you intend to attack in your turn, so to plug any holes created by "EX" results.
- Attrition up north, manoeuvre down south. If you ever have the possibility of killing German units "Out of Supply": go for it! This will help final victory immensely.
- Go after lone enemy infantry, especially the Axis Allies.
- Starting in late 1943 you probably can pretty much do as you wish strategically, so start doing some serious killing and advancing, be aggressive, now is payback time! Na Berlin!

The Soviet War Years in review:

1941: Oh boy, I bet you dearly regret doing all those Army Purges now! Your forces start weak and badly deployed. You will indeed take quite a licking in this awful year. But don't despair, with all the reinforcements and replacements you'll get, the huge Red Army will "keep on ticking". You must strive to field all of your troops each and every turn, if Counters stays in the Destroyed Units box, things are not good! And get those Fortresses deployed in Leningrad and Sevastopol ASAP. If you ever get the chance, even before winter, counter-attack some, and let the Nazis bleed for a change. Remember that they can't buy replacements before 1942, and that they will strive not to lose many when they are on the offensive, so you have to do the killing. If everything does go bad, try not to lose Leningrad and Moscow, please.

1942: This is another dangerous year: You probably do not have that much ground to give up; your Army is improving, but not yet able to fight the Germans on even terms. Do continue to attrition them; make them pay for each city hex taken! Not a Step Back! At the end of the year, when winter comes, you can now mount bigger attacks against weak parts of the German line. You must now have half dozen improved units: You did remember to have a couple of Armoured Armies and the Shock Front built in that lot, right?

1943: Now at last the tide starts turning. Payback time, Soviet style... You get a lot of Strong Attack Event cards: use them! Late in the year you'll have the capability of making impressive territorial gains, a lot of the Germans will be at half-strength by now, don't let them recover! Make at least 2 attacks per turn, 4 at lower odds are better for you than a few high-odds attacks, unless of course you have the possibility of a big encirclement happening. But always be aware that taking unnecessary losses will divert those precious Event cards for replacements purposes instead of the Victorious offensives you want to start making.

1944: Put the Russian Steamroller into high gear! Your units have 2 steps now. This is a blessing (more staying power) but also a curse (you can only flip them using Improvement actions, not cards), so try not to lose more than 2 per turn: indeed, your huge troops reserves are becoming exhausted... Oh yes, kick the Finns out of the war for an easy 1VP. Remember that if the German "High tide" point total is high, you might have to evict most of the "Huns" out of the USSR, so be prepared for a savage fight up north. If the total is less impressive, you could have the luxury of concentrating your attention in the south, capturing Rumania; and thus really starting putting some nails (lend-leased of course!) on Hitler's coffin. If all goes well, start polishing those medals for the big Victory Parade in Berlin!