

Minsk, 1944

A Flames of War v4 Mega-Game Scenario

Minsk was the central node for Army Group Center prior to Operation Bagration, and it served as a critical Soviet objective once the outer defense lines were breached. A series of desperate actions were fought around Minsk, particularly for control of the key railway evacuation routes for the high number of wounded and stragglers who had congregated there.

This scenario allows a large table to accommodate a scaled down version of the fateful clashes during the fall of Minsk. It provides a unique opportunity to field large Late War Soviet forces with the latest equipment, against a mix of German 2nd rate troops and a few elite units trying desperately to stem the tide.

Special Terrain rules:

- Marshes – Byelorussia has a high proportion of marshy terrain, which made it difficult for vehicles in many areas. Marshes are treated as difficult terrain for tracked and half-tracked vehicles, and impassable to gun teams and wheeled vehicles. Marshes provide concealment for any infantry teams, but not vehicles, in them but not past them.
- Peat bogs – peat bogs and cuttings were quite common in this part of the Soviet Union. Peat bogs are treated like marshes, except that they provide no concealment.
- Fields – fields with standing crops are short terrain, plowed fields are treated as terrain.
- Railroads– due to the marshy nature of the ground, railway lines offered a decent level area for vehicle movement. Any vehicle moving along a railway line can ignore any difficult terrain crossed for movement purposes (they move as if in terrain). Railways are not elevated and provide no cover or concealment for stands in contact with them.
- Rivers – rivers in Byelorussia were significant obstacles. Rivers are impassable for vehicles except at bridges or fords, and they restrict infantry and man-packed guns to using the river crossing rules except at bridges or fords. The Soviet player may place one ford anywhere along the Vilya River. Fords are treated as difficult terrain.

Deployment:

The German forces listed as on the table are deployed first, followed by the Soviet forces. The Soviets take the first turn.

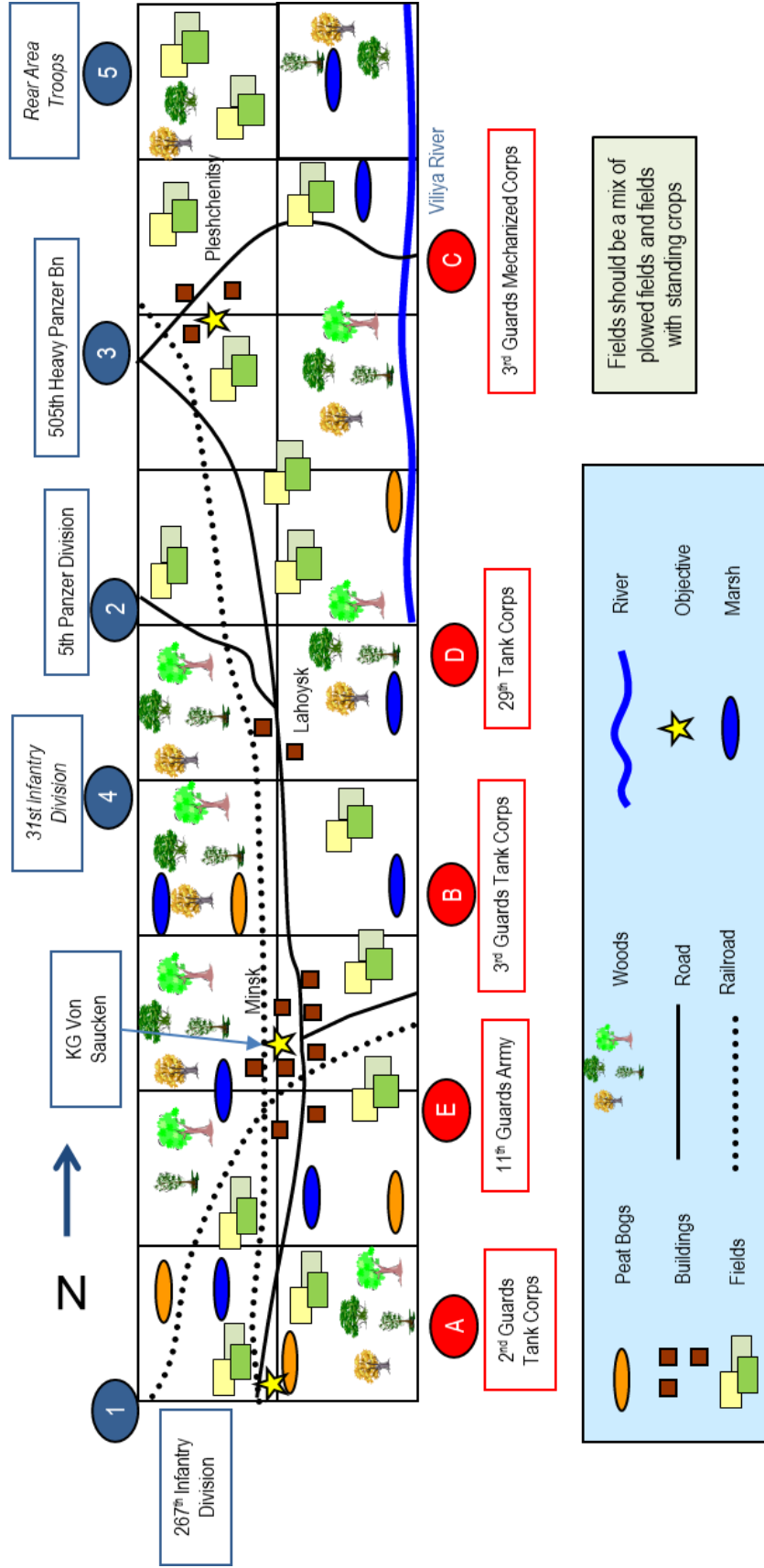
Reinforcements:

Units listed as reinforcements will show the first turn they may arrive. For simplicity, they will arrive on this turn.

Optionally, reinforcement arrivals may be randomized - the owning player rolls a d6 at the start of each turn commencing the turn noted. The reinforcement will enter on a roll of 4+, if not the player rolls again the following turn.

Map:

FOW Mega-Game Battle for Minsk v4 – July, 1944



Forces:

German Forces (4 Axis Players) –

- KG Von Saucken > represented by a 100-point Grenadier Company from Bagration: German, which must have the KG Von Saucken Reserve Grenadier Command Card. It receives the von Saucken and Lt. Windgruber warrior command cards for no points cost. It starts the game deployed on the tabletop, anywhere within 6" of Minsk.
- 5th Panzer Division > represented by a 100-point Panzer or Panzergrenadier Company from Bagration: German. It may deploy up to one infantry or gun unit, plus any units with Scout or Spearhead, within 6" of Lahoyk. Any remaining units enter on turn 1 anywhere within 12" of entry point 2.
- 505th Heavy Panzer battalion > represented by a 100-point Tiger Tank Company from Bagration: German. It enters on turn 2 from entry point 3.
- 267th Infantry Division > represented by a 100-point Grenadier Company from Bagration: German. It starts the game deployed on the tabletop, anywhere within 12" of entry point 1. A maximum of 1 platoon may be deployed in ambush anywhere within 24" of entry point 1.

Added German Forces (More than 4 Axis Players) –

- 31st Infantry Division (Player 5) > represented by a 100-point Grenadier Company from Bagration: German. It enters on turn 2 anywhere within 12" of entry point 4. A maximum of 1 platoon may be deployed in ambush anywhere within 48" of entry point 4.
- Rear Area Troops (Player 6) > represented by a 100-point Grenadier Company from Bagration: German, which must have the KG Von Saucken Reserve Grenadier Command Card. It enters on turn 2 anywhere within 12" of entry point 5.

Russian Forces (4 Allied Players) –

- 2nd Guards Tank Corps > represented by a 100-point IS-2 or IS-85 Guards Tank Regiment from Bagration: Soviet. They enter within 12” of entry point A on turn 1.
- 3rd Guards Tank Corps > represented by a 100-point Hero T-34 or T-34/85 Tank Battalion from Bagration: Soviet. They must purchase the Guards Tanks command card. They enter within 12” of entry point B on turn 1.
- 3rd Guards Mechanized Corps – Advanced Gd> represented by a 100-point Reconnaissance Company from Bagration: Soviet. They start on table, deployed anywhere within 12” of entry point C. They may deploy two heavy pontoon crossings in addition to the ford during deployment, anywhere on the Vilya River.
- 29th Tank Corps > represented by a 100-point T-34 or T-34/85 Tank Battalion from Bagration: Soviet. They enter within 12” of entry point D on turn 1.

Added Soviet Forces (More than 4 Allied Players) –

- 3rd Guards Mechanized Corps (Player 5) > represented by a 100-point T-34 or T-34/85 Tank Battalion from Bagration: Soviet. They enter within 12” of entry point C on turn 2.
- 11th Guards Army (Player 6) > represented by a 100-point Hero Shock Rifle Battalion from Bagration: Soviet. They enter within 12” of entry point E on turn 2.

Stragglers:

Minsk was filled with stragglers and lightly wounded troops from units that had been swept away by the ferocious Soviet assault. Each turn, the German command can attempt to rally some of the stragglers to aid the defense. He rolls 1d6, adding 1 if no stragglers were rallied the previous turn. If a 6 is scored, he may immediately return one infantry team that has been destroyed to a unit in KG Von Saucken.

Airpower:

The aerial action over the Minsk area was fierce but almost totally one-sided in the favor of the Soviet forces.

No player may purchase air support for the battle. Instead, the Russian CiC automatically receives 2 IL-2 Shturmovik Assault Companies on the first two turns of the game.

After that, each turn the CiC for each side rolls a d6. Subtract the German die roll from the Soviet die roll and compare the results on the table below:

Differential	Outcome
-3 or less	German force receives 1x Ju87 Stuka Flight
-2 to 0	No air support for either side
+1 or more	Soviet CiC receives 1x IL-2 Shturmovik Assault Company

Aircraft received by either side arrive automatically.

Weather:

The weather throughout the battles around Minsk was variable, but generally good. There is a chance for intermittent thunderstorms during the afternoon. To reflect this, the German CiC rolls a d6 at the start of each turn commencing on turn 4. On a roll of 6 there are thunderstorms for the turn.

Thunderstorms reduce visibility for the turn to 24" and all rolls to range in and hit receive an additional -1 modifier. The German player adds 1 to his airpower die roll on a turn with thunderstorms.

Winning the Game:

There are three objectives shown on the map. If the Soviet side controls all three at any point during the game, it immediately ends with an overwhelming victory for the Red Army. If the game does not end in this manner, fighting stops at the end of turn 8 due to darkness and the side which has accumulated the highest number of victory points has won a marginal victory. If either side has accumulated double or more VPs, then that side has achieved a significant victory. Any other result and the game has ended in a draw.

Victory Points are scored based on the table below:

Soviet VPs	German VPs	Criteria
5	2	Side controls Minsk Objective (per turn)
3	-	Minsk Objective is contested
-	3	Train escapes Minsk* (each)

* - at the start of every Axis turn after turn 2 the Axis CiC can send a train out of Minsk filled with stragglers and rear area personnel. The train may leave via either entry area 1 or area 3, as nominated by the Axis CiC. Any Soviet stand within 16" of the rail line between Minsk and that exit point may fire at the train as it rolls past, such firing replaces any other firing for that turn. Each stand choosing to fire at the train fires at ROF 1, and automatically hits. The train is destroyed if any hit makes its firepower roll. It escapes (and the Axis players earn VPs) if no hit makes its firepower roll.