

# Flames of War – After Action Report – Late War Operation Little Saturn



# Background - Battlegroup Manstein

*By Hailey Wynn and the Northern Virginia Irregulars taken from FoW Website*

[http://www.flamesofwar.com/Default.aspx?tabid=111&art\\_id=529&kb\\_cat\\_id=30](http://www.flamesofwar.com/Default.aspx?tabid=111&art_id=529&kb_cat_id=30)

This Scenario is based upon the situation that faced the German Army in late December 1942 as the Soviets launched Operation Saturn. The Soviets crushed the Italian 8th Army as they rushed south toward Rostov in an effort to cut off Army Group A in the Caucasus Region.

## *Your Orders*

**Attacker:** You command a tank brigade that is part of the XXIV Tank Corps that has smashed through the thinly held Fascist lines. You have been ordered to advance as rapidly as possible to cut off the Germans before they can retreat from the Caucasus. Your immediate objective is to take an objective that will cut off the German flight.

**Defender:** Der Furher has ordered you to stop the Communists hordes. Unfortunately, in order to do so you must cease all efforts to punch through to the Sixth Army trapped in Stalingrad, Operation Winter Storm, and instead throw ad hoc battle groups drawn from the 6th Panzer Division, 11th Panzer Division, and 306th Infantry Division against this new and greater threat.



### *Preparing for Battle*

1. The initial German force starts the game in prepared positions and gone to ground. All are in ambush.
2. The Soviet forces enter the game as indicated by their reinforcement schedule.
3. Starting on turn two, the German player roles 2 dice each turn and consults the German reinforcement schedule.
4. The attacking player gets the first turn.

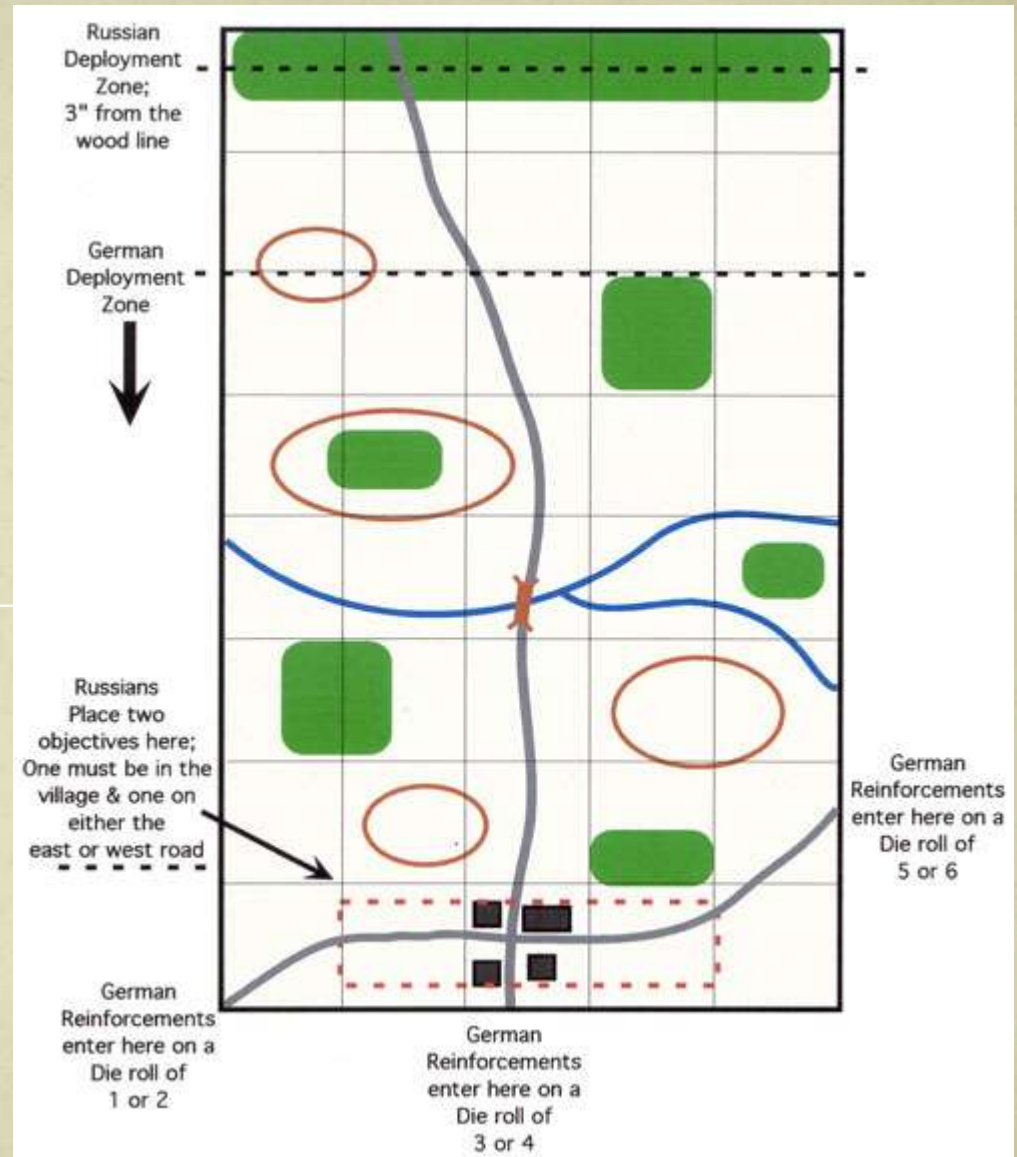
### *The Battle ends when*

1. The attacking player holds either objective at the start of their turn with elements of a tank or infantry company that is in command and not bailed or bogged.
2. The Soviet forces are totally removed from the battlefield.

### *Deciding Who Won*

The Soviet player wins if they hold one of the objectives at the beginning of any new game turn.

The German player wins if all Soviet companies have been totally removed from the game.



## Special Rules

1. Germans may form ad hoc platoons (Kampfgruppen). Once they do so, they behave and are liable to all rules governing platoons, including "Storm Trooper" moves.
2. Individual German vehicles, teams, guns, etc that enter the fight and do not join a platoon cannot move again once they have dug in or taken cover in a building unless a platoon command team, company commander team or Manstein comes within their command range. The individual team then becomes part of the platoon or company or follows Manstein as if he were a platoon leader. Such teams are marked\*.
3. Manstein starts the game at the crossroads. Any platoon that is within 24 inches and line of sight of Manstein that fails a morale check may re-roll that morale check.
4. Terrain: Tanks crossing the frozen stream must roll for a bog check. If they bog, roll again. On a roll of 3 or lower the tank crashes through the ice and is out of the fight.

## Objectives



## German Forces

**Manstein Higher-command team** - Kfz 15 car

### **Mixed Panzer Company**

Company HQ Panzer III J (late) x2

1st Panzer Platoon Panzer III J (late) x3

2nd Panzer Platoon Panzer IV F2 x3

### **1st Panzergrenadier Platoon**

3 Squads, Light Mortar, Kfz 70 x7, Kfz 15 x1

### **Light Anti-Aircraft Platoon**

Command Kubelwagen, Sd Kfz 7/1 x2

### **Heavy Anti-Aircraft Platoon**

Command SMG Team, Kfz 15 x1, 8.8cm FlaK 36 x1, Extra Gun Crew ,Sd Kfz7 x1

### **Armoured Car Platoon**

Sd Kfz 222 x2, Sd Kfz 223 x1

### **Total Points**

**1500 points**



**Neil, Rob, Shaun**



**Turn 1 Brigade Recon**

**Turn 2 Tank Company No.1**

**w/SMG Company**

**Turn 3 Tank Company No.2**

**w/Battalion HQ**

**Turn 4 Tank Company No.3 w\AA Section**

**Turn 5 Heavy Tank Company**

**Turn 6 Motor Rifle Company**

**Turn 7 Artillery**

**Turn 8 Tank Company No.4**

**Turn 9 Tank Company No.5**

**w/Battalion HQ**

**Turn 10 Tank Company No.6**

**Turn 11 Blocking Detachment**

**Starting Turn 3 Limited Air Support**

**Total 6260 points**

Recon Platoon BA-64 x5

1st Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x8

Submachine-gun Company 1 Platoon, Komissar

2nd Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x9

Battalion Command tank, T-34 obr 1941 x1

3rd Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x8

AA Section DShK AAHMG on Truck x3

Guards Heavy Breakthrough Company, KV-1s x 5

1st Company, 3 Platoon, Komissar, Machine-gun

Platoon, Transport Platoon with 4 sections

Motorised Artillery Battalion, 4 Gun Platoons (Zis-3),

Observer, Komissar

1st Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x8

2nd Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x8

Battalion Command Tank T-34 obr 1941 x1

3rd Company, 1st Battalion T-34 obr 1941 x8

Division Komissar and Blocking Detachment

Transport Platoon with 1 sections

IL-2

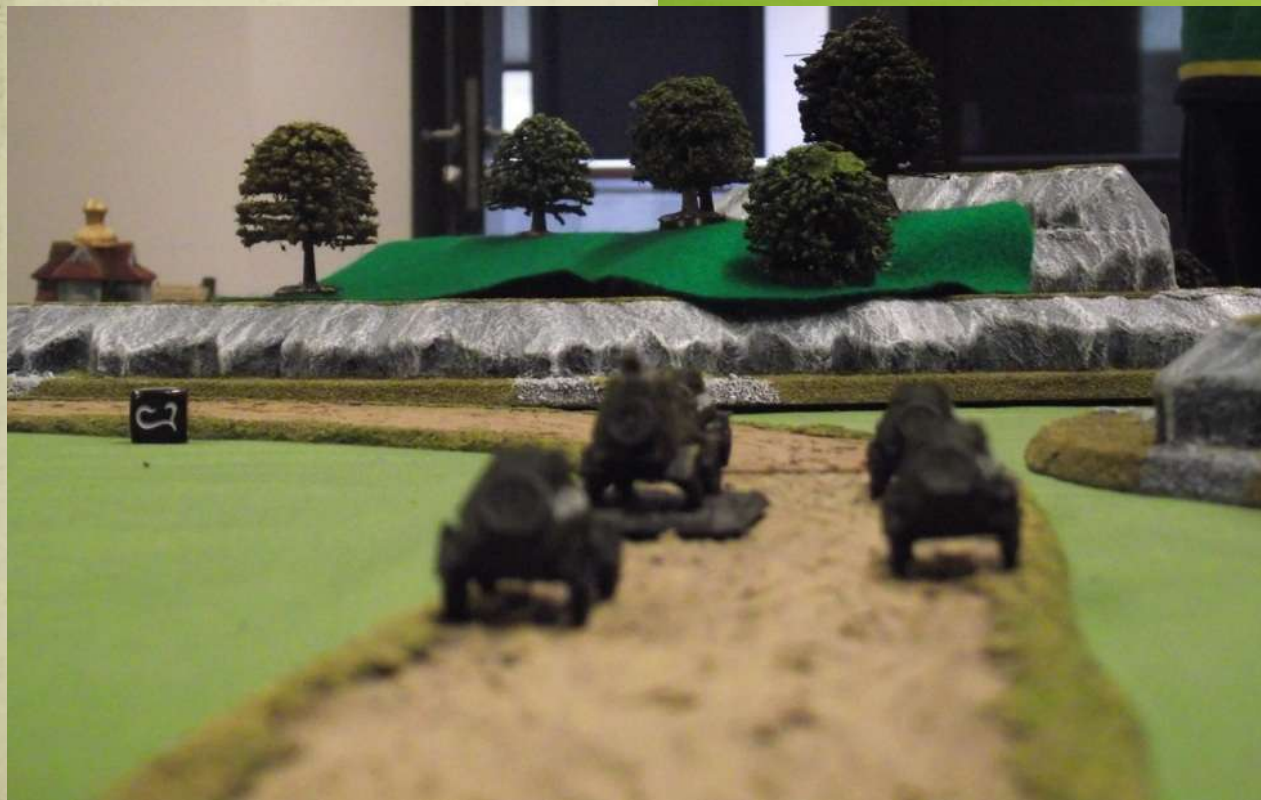
**Jack**  
**Alan**  
**Paul**



**Soviet Forces**

## Turn 1

The Forward Recon elements of  
Soviet breakthrough arrive  
A Squadron of BA-64's





## Turn 1

German reserves appear with a single Panzer IV F2 tank. Meanwhile the AA Halftracks and Flak36 gun throw back their camo nets on 'Fortress Hill' dubbed by the German command.





## Turn 1

The AA guns take Soviet Recon by surprise and destroy 2 cars and bail a third, they promptly disengage to behind a nearby hill



## Turn 2

Soviet Armour arrives down the road at full speed.

Air support arrives in form of a lone IL-2 plane, it flies directly at the Flak36 gun but is shot down easily.





## Turn 2

German Command is quick to respond with a sole Grenadier CinC team!!!

Meanwhile a platoon of Panzer IV F2 tanks ambush from the nearby Wood.



## Turn 2

The combined fire of the Flak36 and Panzers take a toll on the advancing T-34's killing 3 and bailing 2. The valiant Tankers hold their nerve and pass their morale check.





### Turn 3

The Soviet build up on the right flank continues with more T-34's moving at full speed.

Air support swoops in on the Panzers but only manage to bail to of the German Tanks.



Meanwhile the slowly advancing T-34's get lucky and take out the Flak36 gun.

Award that Tanker a Medal...

### Turn 3

German Reinforcement continues with the arrival of a HMG Section on the other side of the table from the Grenadier CinC.

The Germans commit their reserve of Panzer III J Tanks to the fight managing to bail a lead T-34.

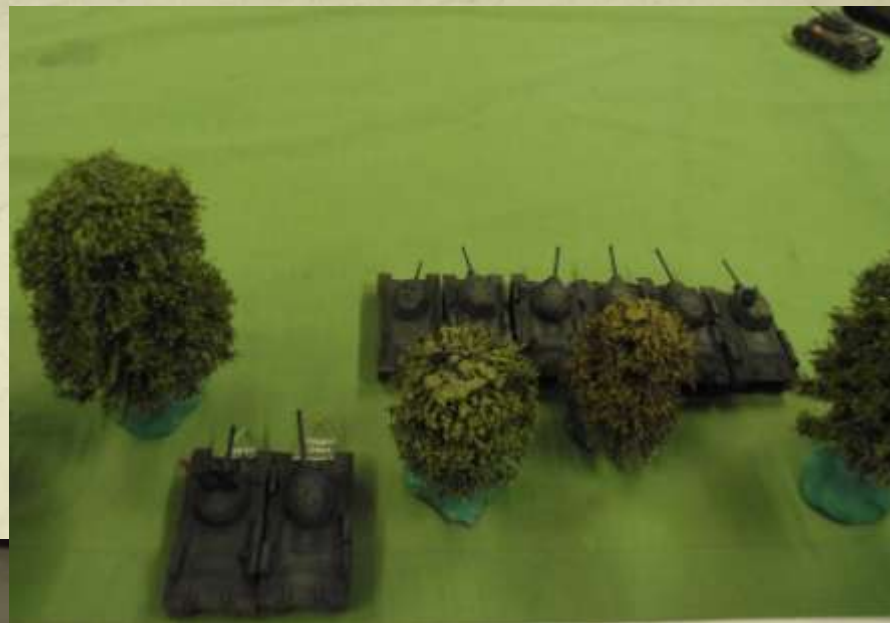




## Turn 4

The axis of attack switches as planned by the Soviet High Command with a Squadron of T-34's appearing from the woods.

Unfortunately the Conscript drives are not good at driving through Woods and bog 2 tanks.



On the right flank the return fire from the Soviets destroys a Panzer III with ease. While the remains of the SMG Platoon disembark from their rides and advance up the hill.

## Turn 4

The German reserves manage to bring on the Grenadier 2iC team, he prompt takes command of the HMG Section.

Panzer fire manages to kill 2 more T-34 tanks and bail a third. The Soviets pass their morale.





## Turn 5

All the Soviet tanks manage to remount and advance, for some reason the training of the Tankers did not teach them how to dig out their tanks.

On the left flank the KV-1s Heavy Guards tanks crash out the tree line.



## Turn 5

All guns point at  
the few Panzer IV  
tanks!!!



In response German reserves race a platoon of Panzer IV F2 tanks to the battlefield, they advance behind the Hill beyond the frozen river.



## Turn 5

The German Command teams improvise their defences....



## Turn 6

With 'Fortress Hill' cleared of defending Halftracks and the Panzer IV tanks busy engaged in the Wood.

The Strelkovy Company mounted on Transport Trucks race down the road.





## Turn 6

The Panzer IV platoon finds itself surrounded by Soviet Armour which fires and decimates the German Armour.

The left flank is now clear of enemy, the Soviets are free to advance towards the river.



## Turn 6

The lone Panzer IV on the bridge also finds himself the target of Soviet fire and at even extreme range, he is blown apart.

The nearby Panzer III Platoon along with the AA Halftracks decide to retreat in the face of all the Armour moving their way.

Luckily they pass all their bogging tests to cross the frozen river.





## Turn 6

To the surprise of the Soviet commanders, the Germans reveal their Recce Squadron from 'Fortress Hill' to fire on the Strelkovy Column.

They destroy 6 trucks but only kill 2 Infantry teams as they bail out!!!!



## Turn 7

The Strelkovy Company rallies and they all dismount and advance towards 'Fortress Hill'.

They fail to be in range to engage the Recce Squadron but the small SMG Platoon manages to send in a single team which succeeds in destroying 2 cars and forcing the final car to retreat.





## Turn 7

On the left flank, the Soviet advance finds the Panzer IV tanks ready at extreme range but the tough armour on the T-34's means only tank is destroyed.



## Turn 7

Soviet air support arrives in force and finds the retreating German armour in perfect bombing position.

The AA Halftracks manage to shoot down 1 Flying Tank but the Aircraft destroy 2 Tanks and 1 Halftrack.





## Turn 7

German reserves are limited again as a single HMG Section arrives on the field of battle.

The German High Command is worried about the mass of enemy troops moving towards the river; so radios the Panzergrenadier Platoon to engage the Soviet Strelkovy Company so they appear from 'Fortress Hill' and open up on the Strelk hitting 16 times, but only 4 teams fail their cover save.

That still leaves 23 teams advancing....



## Turn 8

The Soviet forces advance to the river, while the Infantry ready themselves to storm the hill.





## Turn 8

Meanwhile 2 Platoons of T-34's bypass the 'Fortress Hill' and continue to engage the German Armour.



## Turn 8

After surviving an Artillery bombardment, the Panzergrenadiers are assaulted by the Strelkovy. A bitter struggle through the woods ends in a Victory for the Soviets as they sweep away all Facist defenders.





## Turn 9

Soviet Heavy Tanks start  
to advance over the frozen  
river



## Turn 9

While other T-34's also make a move on the right flank over the river.

German reinforcements produce a lone Marder to try and hold back the tide of communists.





## Turn 10

Even more Soviet armour rolls up the road, while more tanks ford the river.



## Turn 10

The KV-1s tanks having successfully crossed the river but failing to MG down the Germans, assault and kills the HMG Platoon.





## Turn 11

Finally the pressure of all these tanks across the river results in 3 T-34's falling to a watery grave.

KV-1s ascend the hill and destroy the last German Armour.



## Turn 11

Then finally a good roll on the reserves brings a pair of Stug III tanks which engage the Soviets at long range but fail to damage the T-34's.





## Turn 12

The Soviet advance continues getting closer to the village objectives.



## Turn 13

German reserves bring on a pair of leG18 Infantry guns which manage to kill a T-34 tank, but are now in line of sight of the KV-1s platoon.





## Turn 13

The KV-1s tanks assault the remaining German defenders around the left flank objective and consolidate their position.

Unfortunately the German forces have nothing that can defeat the Soviet Heavy Armour or contest.



## The End

So ends Operation Little Saturn – Victory to the Soviets as they break even further into the German lines, 7 hours of fun gaming. May have been a bit one sided due to the reserves table rolls – but was entertaining.

