DESIGN NOTES FOR KURSK: PROKHOROVKA
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   Kursk: Prokhorovka is a one day scenario depicting the actual critical battle of Prokhorovka. The scenario is based on Prokhorovka: The Historical Scenario, a scenario in the John Tillers Campaign Series Module; East Front. While the Campaign Series depicts battles on the tactical level, the Panzer Campaigns depict them on the organizational level. While there are already Prokhorovka scenarios in Kursk '43, these last about three or four days and almost never end in the classical armored engagement. At least with this scenario, one will have a reasonable facsimile of the classical battle.

Mapboard

   The mapboard was easy to do. I just cordoned off an area that corresponded to the area of the Campaign Series scenario. I then deleted the eastern six kilometers of the mapsheet as this area is never used in the scenario in either game. This made the map more compact.

Orders of Battle

   The orders of battle were patterned after the ones in the Campaign Series scenario. I had to create some additional support units for the German units. These were Infantry Guns (both 75mm and 150mm), 50mm Anti-Tank Guns, SS Pioneer Halftrack, and SS Grenadier Motorcycle units. I only used the support weapons that were at regimental level. Those support weapons that were organic to the battalions are presumed to be divided up among the line companies and thus are not shown. One SS German grenadier battalion in the Totenkopf Division (3rd Battalion, 6th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment) was still mounted on motorcycles, so I made them into motorcycle companies. The LAH Division now has a Begleit Company as part of it. It was the only division that had one. On the Russian side I changed the anti-aircraft companies in the mechanized and motorized brigades. The game uses 37mm anti-aircraft guns for these units but this is not accurate. In truth, these were heavy machine gun units, usually 12.7mm. So I changed those units to those. Also the artillery battalions in those battalions were actually 76.2mm Infantry Guns, not the regular 76.2mm field guns. I changed those too. Naturally there were no unit pictures for any of those units in the game, so I had to borrow some pictures from other games in the Panzer Campaigns Series. I included those unit pictures in files in the Zip-file. (Sidenote: Recent sources show that the 76.2mm field guns and 37mm anti-aircraft were a recent change to the Russian Motorized Rifle and Mechanized Brigades in 1943. Most units had them but some did not. Players as an option may change the artillery and anti-aircraft battalions in those units back to those weapons.)

Scenario

   The scenario set-up is based on that of the Campaign Series version. While most units are in the same locations in both scenarios, there there a few units in the HPS version that were one hex away from their true location, usually due to the size of the hexes and the stacking limitations. I have the same units fixed in place in both scenarios. The release times for the units in the HPS version, because of the two-hour turns, may get released a little earlier or later than they do in the Campaign Series version. These unit fixes are to keep the units in place until their historical time of release. But the HPS version

has a problem in that fixed units can be released if they are spotted by an enemy unit. This means that units may be released much sooner as visibility increases during the day. On Turn 1 this is not a problem as it is the Dawn turn and the visibility is one hex. But on Turn 2 the visibility goes up to two hexes and units in the front line see each other, which at the very least results in massive artillery exchanges between the units and attacks by companies who would not normally attack because of their weak strength. Of course I am talking about AI controlled units here. A human player can keep his units from doing stupid things. (But then, the Russians had this fetish about constantly attacking and counterattacking so these attacks by weak units are not so out of character with them.)

There are few units that are at 100% strength in this scenario, even on the German side. While both sides had taken considerable casualties up to this point, the Germans kept their units close to full strength by tapping their support units for excess personnel. However, by the 12th of July, this source of replacements was running out and few of their previously wounded had returned to duty. The Russians of course have several major units that have been in battle for several days and are at much reduced strength. One would think that the units of the 5th Guards and 5th Guards Tank Armies would be at full strength. However, both armies suffered from stragglers and vehicle breakdowns during the long road march to Prokhorovka and these would not catch up until after the battle.

Some players wonder what Group Trufanov is doing on the map when historically it was suppose to go south to fight the German III Panzer Korps. Well it did not move out until the early afternoon on the 12th of July. Well, Rotmistrov procrastinated in ordering it to move out because he wanted a small reserve in the south in case the German attacked the II Tank and II Guards Tank Corps. Once the II Guards Tank Corps launched its attack against Das Reich, he then ordered it to move out. Those two exit hexes for the Russians are the exit hexes for Group Trufanov only, although I am sure that some Russian players will exit other units off to get more points if they get the chance.

I have played this scenario several times against the AI and can say that while it gives me a Prokhorovka-like battle, each battle is never the same. Against a human opponent the battle is more like history with some minor differences.

Conclusion

I hope this scenario gives the players a unique look at the historical battle of Prokhorovka. Anyway, I hope that players will enjoy it.