

TTS Game Set One Introduction

TTS GAME SET ONE comprises the first three scenarios of this series; Alpha (Forced March), Beta (Hasty Assault) and Gamma (Through the Gauntlet). This set of scenarios strives to do three things, introduce the basic concepts of the SL game system so that these concepts must be implemented by the players over a field of play, create a balanced setting that can challenge the most experienced players, and to design a quick-play scenario that can be used to introduce new players to the Squad Leader system. Here are some introductory notes that might prove useful, consider them "designer's notes" if you wish. Once you have gained some experience, or if you desire a larger scenario, take a look at *Mirnaya Derevnya*. The first of my "Grand Tactical Series" of larger actions, this scenario combines all three of the Game Set One scenarios into a larger battle in the tradition of SL #3 (Stalingrad). - Alan Yngve

Scenario Alpha (Forced March)

The first (zero) level of Scenario Alpha presents both players with a setting where the key rules covering movement, terrain effects, range, leadership, firepower and the "infantry fire table" (IFT) will all be clearly displayed. I don't encourage players to look at replays of this scenario, because the important tactical relationships really should be experienced by everyone. A couple points are relevant though. The Russians have four main approach routes and will often find themselves starting the game with the question of how many squads should be sent along which of these routes. It needs to be emphasized that these initial Russian decisions coupled with the German decisions and complicated by the variances from the IFT will set the tone of each game. All Russian choices are viable ... it is what you do during the game and how you react to your opponent's moves that will provide the interest and excitement.

Taking the Russian routes from east to west. The eastern-most is the "far hook" maneuver along the east end of the board. This route attempts to keep out of maximum German fire-range (12 hexes for squads) by moving along the A/B/C hexrows. When the Germans have Machine Guns, this route will usually involve movement through the cover of the hex A4 woods. The next route is through the F/G/H hexrows and aims to get to the closest exit area as quickly as possible. The third route involves occupying J4 as a firebase and moving across the I/J/K hexrows. The western-most route is usually along J8/k8/L7/M7 to the central farmhouse. This route can be used to establish firebases against the German patrol, it can continue southwest to challenge German positions around T3/T4, and it can gain access to the exit area through the N/O/P/Q hexrows.

I will not detail the various German choices because each one is better against a different mix of Russian maneuvers. Nonetheless, the Germans will be forced to maneuver just as aggressively as the Russians in order to attempt to place themselves in the best position to prevent those five Russian squads from exiting the playing area. As the German player, plan carefully before you move your first unit on your first turn, your future deployment may depend upon it! At every level the Germans have certain advantages over their Russian adversaries, thinking about these and trying to take full advantage of them will often be important to eventual victory.

Scenario Beta (Hasty Assault)

This "classic assault" problem offers a very wide variety of tactical issues for both the attack and the defense, all in a surprisingly small play area. This situation is primarily about maneuver at close range. Just because typical combat ranges here will be three hexes or less does not mean that maneuver is not an important consideration. The assault will find that the comments found in the Squad Leader Designer Notes do make some sense, even without Smoke (until added in Beta-2). For a very good discussion of tactics as they apply to the initial level (zero) of Hasty Assault, please take a look at the "A Game With A View" available on this web site.

This German assault has a time schedule that does not permit too much caution, OTOH excessive haste can easily push the German force up to the four squad, loss threshold; reducing the best possible result to only a draw. So the challenge is how to effectively advance without also suffering excessive casualties. As a rough guideline, the Germans should try to be across the street into the town-center in some strength by the end of German turn three and the situation at this point in the scenario can be used as a guide as to which side is doing better. If the Germans are not into the town by the end of turn three, they may not have sufficient time to prepare the second assault to clear the rest of the Russians from the town's stone buildings. While the first assault across the street can be planned to some extent, this second assault will always have to be planned "on the fly" based upon the specific situation at the time. Innovation and flexibility will be a great asset to the German attack.

The defending Russians have a very different task. A good first goal is to try to cause four squad losses on the

Germans ... which improves the "worst" result to just a draw. But the ultimate aim is to deny German control of at least one of those stone buildings. To do this you will need to preserve your force, maintain as many good-order squads as possible, and frustrate as many German intentions as possible. You have internal lines of communication, better cover, the Germans have to move through open ground to get to you, and your 9-2 leader is an invaluable asset.

Other topics that this scenario will present to each commander: cutting rout routes with flanking maneuvers, use and removal of concealment, drawing fire, flooding the enemy with too many potential targets, counterattack, close combat versus fire combat, leader positioning, and critical rallying efforts.

Scenario Gamma (Through the Gauntlet)

This scenario adds many interesting twists to the operations of both sides. There are a wide range of tactics available to both the German player and the Russian player; the choices made will lead to each scenario effort being very different. The introduction of vehicles, even just trucks and halftracks, changes the tempo of an action, particularly with the implications of rule 16.7 that requires veicles to be fired upon as they move (or in their ending hex) rather than the normal Defensive Fire procedures against infantry.

The Victory Conditions should concentrate efforts on the successful "delivery" of the Russian reinforcements to the town and the German effort to prevent this reinforcement. With only four turns, time and distance should be an important consideration to both players. It doesn't help the Russian player to find a route into the town if that route takes more than four turns to execute. The Russian player will need to decide whether the entering reinforcements should dismount to walk or fight, or try to ride all the way into the town, along with developing a pln for the town garrison forces. While all this Russian planning is being contemplated, the German player will be attempting to frustrate those Russian plans through delay and/or firepower.

Terrain issues covered include the effects of the multi-story building rules for building 3m2 and the various complexities of vehicle movement: shellholes, moving to high ground, open ground truck movement, effect of wrecks (especially on roads), and eventually the importance of vehicle covered arc (CA) and careful vehicle movement mechanics, especially witht he halftracks and panzerfausts.