

DESIGNER NOTES

The Battle of Moscow was first published in 1970. I found it captivating based on German divisions pitted against Russian armies and the siege of Leningrad in its early stages. At this point in the campaign, Russian armies were mostly at corps strength, roughly 30,000 to 40,000 men.

The Battle of Moscow was a breakthrough which introduced double movement by which either player could move, blast a hole in the enemy line and use a second movement to exploit.

When I began the task of renovation, game balance was tilted toward the German. The rules allowed not only two movement impulses, but two attack impulses as well. The Russian couldn't stand up to it.

The answer lay in history and common sense. On the first turn when weather is fair, it makes sense the German should have two movement and combat impulses. But by turn two, mud conditions prevail. I decided to limit the Germans to one impulse of each type. The original weather chart was too variable. Based on five weeks of mud which actually occurred, five straight turns of mud was the answer, followed by the mid-November freeze which got the tanks moving again.

Of further help was a switch in the combat system from unit elimination to step reduction.

As it turned out, step reduction made the Soviet forces too strong, and something was

needed to balance it. So, a simple air power system was introduced for the German.

But it's a temporary asset which dissipates as weather and maintenance take their toll.

Other problems concerned the German northern defenses, especially around Leningrad. Forts with strong defensive ability were developed to prevent a Russian breakthrough. Since Russian attacks never seriously threatened German siege lines during this period, I allow the game to simulate it.

One of the biggest problems concerned placing limitations on German action against Leningrad and the adjoining northern front. The Russians simply didn't have enough units to defend. So fortifications were introduced. In addition, limits were placed on how many mechanized units the Germans could send north.

The map has undergone revision as well. The three half-forts of old have been replaced by the Mozhaish Line which is less formidable. There are more woods in front of Moscow and the two reservoir lakes to the north are a more accurate depiction of the terrain. Two port hexes have been added to the south shore of Lake Ladoga by which Russian units defending Leningrad can trace supply.

This summarizes most of the changes which hopefully produce a better game.

(Scroll down...)