

## **AAR FrF71 „Pulling Out“**

### **First playing as the Russians:**

Very interesting scenario with an unusual situation! Three German 105mm howitzers with a small security force are set up in a village area. The Russians may set up all around with a force of tanks and infantry that can crush them. But it is the Germans that move first. The Germans must kill all 8 Russian tanks (3 of them reinforcing) or pull out howitzers towards the direction they entered with one howitzer counting as 3 destroyed Russian tanks. Enter a German rescue force of tanks and halftracks with three prime movers to pull out the howitzers. To boot, of the at start Russian force of 5 tanks, a random two of them are actually abandoned with their crews setting up concealed beneath.

Unfortunately for my Russians BOTH "abandoned" tanks happened to be in sight within less than 6 hexes of two of the howitzers... They managed to enter their tanks but one was taken out by a CH, the other was Shocked. I had a hunch where one of the howitzers might be HIP and was right. My "hunting" platoon of T34s managed to dogde a shot of it (being not long in LOS) and with a bit of careening, hiding behind walls, etc. I came up adjacent to it ready to overrun it from outside its CA. It would not be ASL, if the bugger would not have managed to turn, IF and shock the front one just ADJACENT. The second one tried ESB for a reasonable 1 MF and of course immobilized ADJACENT to it. With the fifth tank, I managed to OVR and destroy the freaking gun.

Alas, my tank force was in quite a tatter early. This allowed the German reinforcements to rush up quickly. The two Shocked T34s did recover but by then were set upon by many German tanks. One of them chased off the crew of the second howitzer. Then, after some style points, I wanted to use that tank for a double OVR for the abandoned howitzer and the remaining one - again, only to be stopped in the ADJACENT hex dead.

At the same time, there was grim infantry fighting going on in the village with the Germans getting the upper hand due to their tank support. My plan was to somehow kill the last howitzer and then disperse and run with my tanks in hope that the Germans would not be able to destroy all. Alas, my remaining T34 and the two reinforcing light tanks were destroyed in the effort.

Now the Germans could hook up and flee faster that I would have had a chance to chase with my KV behemoth reinforcement about to enter. Great scenario! My recommendation!

### **Second playing as the Germans:**

I played this one again, this time as the Germans. My opponent came up with a clever setup, placing the bulk of his forces in the 62AA5 area. This leaves the Germans in a dilemma from the start. You can't get at the Russian tanks in the woods from the back, because you would have to risk bog and don't have enough MF. Furthermore you are threatened by Russian AFV reinforcements to your rear if you try. You can't get at them from the front, because even with some of the T34s abandoned, trying to go vs their frontal armor is a losing game especially because the Germans would have move into position and to give the Russians the first shot. But if you don't engage them, the Russians will likely be able to man all T34s which will then be tough to overcome. As the German, you would rush in across bd FrFA, but in doing so, you will present the Russians an opportunity to get in your flank on the way in and to block you on the way out with infantry support. At the same

time, your guns within the village will not be able to shoot at much. So the German HAS to move the guns and HAS to move into the Russians.

Luckily, the first Russian attack using three T34s by my opponent might have been a bit too rash. Together with two Pz38 which I had kept offboard and a little luck, I managed to take out two T34s by dancing around them and getting in with those Pz38s from the rear. The placement of my artillery pieces and movement of my prime movers was not optimal in view of pulling them out. Placed a little differently, I could have managed to hook them up a turn earlier. But even then, the way out would be blocked by Russians.

I withdrew from the village immediately except for a few units covering the guns until they hooked up. This way I was able to intercept some of the Russian infantry with my infantry as they moved up from bd62. Meanwhile, my Panzers lead a dance with the thick-hided Russian ones with casualties on both sides. I diverted two tanks to deal with the Russian infantry which could be dangerous with their inherent FP vs the prime movers pulling the guns.

Eventually, I managed to break and scatter the infantry force. The Russian was unlucky in failing twice to kill one moving ART piece with MGs from within the same hex. The second moving gun was killed by a CH of the KV-behemoth. The third artillery piece failed to get out of the village but managed to immobilize the KV monster. My audacious 9-2 placed a DC on one T34 to kill it. One of the T70 had gone down, too.

But the Russian scarily had a stationary T34 and T70 in the same hex and adjacent to my moving gun. If he could kill it, then it would be hard for the Germans to win requiring the despatch of all 8 russian tanks. I moved my two remaining Pz38s into the hexes of the Russian tanks, which in turn allowed me to pull out the gun unscathed. The gun could not exit because the roads were blocked by a lot of wrecks, so I tried ESB and immobed the prime mover (still having the gun hooked up, though). Everything else converged on the two Russian tanks that would have good chances to kill the prime mover if they could move towards it. However, the during the AFPh both Russian tanks were taken out by adjacent German tanks not before depleting all special ammo which was left at that point. Again, it was loads of fun to play this scenario. And I think that the Russian plan was very good.