

1. Introduction

The following game was played with the **CEaW_BJR-v106mod** (where BJR stands for Borger, Jim and Ronnie) mod to CEaW version 1.06. This game is one of many that has been (or is being) played to test and refine the **CEaW_BJR-v106mod**. This mod includes both data and map modifications and a set of house rules that are straight forward, intuitive and easy to follow.

The objectives of the **CEaW_BJR-v106mod** mod is to create a gaming experience within the constraints of the CEaW game engine that is enjoyable, has infinite replayability (i.e., no two games are alike) has game events that are historically feasible and is as balanced as possible. Enjoyment and replayability are important because it keeps people coming back and playing CEaW. However; we also wanted a gaming experience that was also about the history. We were not interested in "gaming" the game and were after getting the most historically accurate simulation of WWII out of CEaW as possible. Maybe we're now ... maybe not. That is the purpose of this and other games we're playing. We're trying to figure out if there are more tweaks that we can make to make it more accurate. Given two competent players that follow an historical timeline of events we wanted a historical type outcome 80 to 90% of the time. Given two competent players and strategies, the question shouldn't be if the Axis defeats the Allies, but do they last longer than they did historically. If so, the Axis player wins, if not they lose. Also, we wanted a game that "accurately" simulates historical possible variants, such as Operation Sea Lion. We are after an historical simulation of WWII that allows for exploration of realistic variants or allows for recreation, on a grand scale, the military events of WWII.

The below game was played between Jim as the Axis and Ronnie as the Allies. What's captured in the next section is the email log (or PBEM diary) between Jim and Ronnie. In general, we stayed in "character" adding another dimension and fun element to the game. These entries reflect the state of the game as it was at that point and illustrates the ebb and flow and momentum changes through the entire game. Also, it captures the impact of the fog of war and each side. Not knowing exactly what the other side has and where they've deployed their forces makes for a different game than when one has 100% total knowledge of the game pieces and their location. This game was played with oil on, fog of war on and random research off. Periodically you'll see "out of character" or third party comments which will be italicized and highlighted by color (*Borger (Stauffenberg)*, *Jim (Happycat)*, *Ronnie (RKR1958)*) specific to the one making the comments.

The majority of the work on this mod was done by Borger (Stauffenberg) and Jim (Happycat). I feel honored to be included at this late stage in both refinements to the mod and play testing of it. They are both more experienced and better players than I and I appreciate their patience and advice at both the strategic and tactical levels. While I have enjoyed the vanilla CEaW game immensely (vs AI only), I have to say that the PBEM play test games against Jim and Borger have been the richest and most enjoyable

experience that I've had in my 35+ years of playing wargames. My first wargame was Avalon Hill's France 1940, which I got as a gift in 1972 at the age of 14.

2. PBEM Diary (email log)

9/1/39

Axis

My attack in Poland went fairly well, and I think it will be hard to defend Warsaw effectively. Hopefully I have enough zoc on the remaining units to prevent their movement towards Warsaw.

The biggest disappointment for the Germans was the poor performance of their fighters against the Polish fighters. In the air-to-air combat, I lost two steps to your one. So the Poles still have an effective air arm left for turn two.

Allies

I made a few counterattacks in Poland, which were not too effective. Nothing else to report.

9/21/39

Axis

Poland still lives, but Denmark is done like dinner.

I allocated half of my air assets to Denmark---it is more important to me on turn two than Poland. The reason I like to get Denmark early is to release the u-boat trapped in the Baltic.

Allies

Nothing to report. At this point in the war there isn't a lot the Allies can do except lose countries to Germany.

10/11/39

Axis

Poland surrendered this turn; otherwise nothing going on.

Allies

Nothing to report this turn.

10/31/39

Axis

Whacked a convoy for 9 pp's, no other action.

It was tempting to go after your transports with my u-boats, but your escorts were in exactly the wrong place (from my point of view) and I could not get into the position I would have preferred. Anyway, convoys are more suitable targets for u-boats.

Allies

No action to report. I'm not happy about your u-boats spotting my transports. Not to give away too much of my secrets but I made transport protection my number one priority. Convoy protection is high too but I just don't have the naval assets to do everything I'd like to ... like take care of those pesky u-boats.

11/20/39

Axis

Three u-boats mauled the convoy that had been attacked on the previous turn. It is now down to two pp's.

The only other action was a series of air attacks against a French corps.

Allies

What on earth are you up to? Why did you attack that French infantry corps? I would have thought that you'd want to preserve and position your air power for attacking Holland. This makes me think you're up to something else.

12/10/39**Axis**

Goering was bored, and wanted the Luftwaffe to provide a demonstration of its capabilities.

Actually, I wasn't quite ready for Holland last turn, but the air units were already in place (their positioning is such that I can still reach Holland, they are well placed for Belgium and they can reach a large part of France from their bases near the border). I'm hoping that I will only have to rebase them once during the campaign against France, instead of twice or more as has happened in the past.

In addition, in my game with Borger, he bombed the French infantry units for a couple of turns before invading Belgium, and it really screwed up the French building plans. So I thought I would try that strategy.

This turn, Holland was crushed. A one turn victory is usually achievable, provided that you can get three hexes on The Hague, and that your air units plaster the target. I allocated three of the four Luftwaffe units to the defender in the capital, so that it was already battered before attacking. Then I use one armor unit to clear the garrison due east of The Hague, and a couple of infantry can usually take care of the other garrison. If you come up one or two steps short on the second garrison, it's a good idea to have one more infantry in range to deal with that. You MUST have three hexes on the capital in order to succeed.

Then, I hit it with armor, followed by two mechanized corps. I don't think Borger uses armor, because he is worried about losses to the armor when attacking a city. This early in the game, I don't care---the high shock rating of armor is worth the risk. The motorized units also have better shock values than foot infantry, so I try to utilize them as well.

Try this in your game with Borger---you will be pleasantly surprised by the outcome, I think.

No other action this turn.

Allies

Nothing to report. No action. Nice take out of Holland. You definitely had me concerned that you were going straight for France first.

12/30/39**Axis**

All's quiet on the western front! Well, the Luftwaffe ran a small raid against a French corps near the border, but otherwise it was quiet.

Allies

No action to report. I like the positioning of your air units. I'll have to use that next time. In my game against Borger I had already invaded Holland when you emailed me your technique. Unfortunately I didn't get to use it. It took me two turns to capture Holland. I did capture Belgium in one turn; however, I've a couple of my tank corps exposed to counterattack and am worried about them.

I don't know if it's my rolls or not but it seems that my air and infantry corps are suffering higher losses than in previous games against Borger.

1/19/40**Axis**

Belgium was conquered this turn. I agree with you; the more I look at the positioning of the air units, the more I like it. It was optimal for Belgium, and means I won't have to reposition for the attack against France.

Air losses for my Germans were about what I expected, so maybe you just had some bad rolls. But, I wasn't happy with the three-step loss for the first armor that attacked a garrison unit. But, the other two fared better, so I should not complain.

Allies

No action. Nothing to report. Just waiting for the German onslaught.

2/8/40**Axis**

The Germans have straightened out the line near the Meuse River, by eliminating a couple of French garrison units.

No other action

Allies

No action except the two French BB's bombarded the German infantry corps on the coast reducing it by one step.

2/28/40**Axis**

I continued peeling away the front line garrison units in the French line. Three of them were eliminated. No action anywhere else.

Allies

The French counterattacked two German infantry corps. One was reduced to a step 1 and the second was reduced to a step 5. I'm trying to blunt your advance into France.

3/19/40**Axis**

That was the right time for a counter-attack. You forced me to make a very tough decision: stop and repair, or go for broke. I decided to use my over-worked but very efficient air force to soften up key hexes, and then I drove hard for the breakthrough in the centre. My losses were heavy, but I think the back of the French Army is broken. I'm not sure that there is very much between me and Paris now. The key is that the French armor is gone.

Allies

Not much action this turn. The French are sure in bad trouble.

4/8/40**Axis**

The French are in even more trouble now---Paris has Germans adjacent to it, and the French forces are even more diminished. But it has not been a picnic for the Germans. Repairs are going to cost me a fortune!

Allies

Nothing at sea.

On land the French lashed out like a dying animal. I destroyed a German motorized corps. It's been much bloodier for you than last game. Your losses are about three times as much. Is it the changes in the mod?

4/28/40**Axis**

I think I can safely say that the mod had little or nothing to do with my losses. My goal was an early collapse of France, no matter what it took.

At the same time, your defense was aggressive, and cost me extra steps too.

Although I would rather not have lost the motorized corps, I think a few extra turns of French production, and the early conquest of France will compensate for that.

Because I needed so little to enter Paris, I was able to rebuild almost all of my ground losses, and my air units are in pretty good shape. So for the first time for me with CEAW, Sea Lion is a temptation. My problems with that are, of course (1) the Royal Navy and (2) I don't know how much stuff you shipped to Egypt. So, I could be sticking my head into a buzz saw if I try it :)

At sea, three u-boats annihilated the northern Canadian convoy. Hopefully you get another one next turn---my u-boat captains would be so very happy.

Allies

No real action this turn. Last turn I debated moving the infantry corps out of Paris to finish off your motorized corps. It was at strength step 1 and I really wanted to destroy it. Maybe that was a mistake. Oh well, the lonely time for the UK starts now.

5/18/40**Axis**

No action from Germany this turn, as I still had repairs to make.

I don't think it was a mistake to leave Paris in this case. It was going down anyway, and killing a motorized unit is a real bonus for the Allies.

Allies**6/7/40****Axis****Allies**

Nothing to report this turn. Just waiting to see what you're going to do.

6/27/40

Axis

This turn, the Luftwaffe commenced an operation against the RAF. A medium bomber squadron attacked the port near London, and forced a fighter battle. Then another medium bomber squadron plastered the fighter base, damaging the previously depleted fighters some more.

It will be interesting to see if a continuous campaign of attacks like this can duplicate the history of 1940. One aspect I will try not to duplicate is switching objectives in mid-campaign. Destroying British fighters is the goal, nothing else matters at this point. If I can get air supremacy, maybe Sea Lion is possible (?).

Allies

You've certainly got me concerned about Sea Lion. I'm taking this threat very seriously!

7/17/40

Axis

This turn, three of my u-boats attacked a convoy west of Ireland, and killed 23 of 24 pp's. But I saw another convoy with 32 pp's go sailing by right after, so I guess Britain won't starve.

A couple of my aircraft tried to stir things up on the English coast, but I guess the RAF is busy repairing their fighters right now.

That's about it.

Allies

I attacked your wolfpack in force. One u-boat was reduced to step-5, a second to step-6 and the third to step-9. No other combat.

8/6/40

Axis

The u-boats did not reply, they have served their purpose---which was to get the Royal Navy out to sea and away from their ports.

You will notice several German transports adjacent to the British coast. This is the first time I have ever attempted Sea Lion against a human player; it should be interesting.

The Luftwaffe, aided by Italian warplanes, attacked a couple of targets on the Channel coast. A German DD squadron is in the Channel, and a rather cheeky German BB unit is blockading Edinburgh port, which is also threatened by troop landings.

In the next two turns, I will either be well started on a campaign to capture England, or I will have effectively lost the war. If this fails, I don't see how I could be ready for Russia in 1941, and although the rules allow us now to consider a 1942 invasion, I don't really see it as a formula for success.

Anyway, this ought to be entertaining

Allies

Well I feel honored to be the first human player that you've tried Sea Lion against. I was afraid that your wolfpack attack was a trap but I just couldn't resist. Anyway, I

threw everything I could against your transports and I did the best I could to protect the coast. I've left several gaps.

8/26/40

Axis

Good defensive play; I think you did everything possible.

This turn I came up a bit short in my attempt to capture a port. But, I expected it might take two turns, so I'm ready.

The u-boats whittled away at one of your carriers, and it is down to five steps. I needed to cut your air power a bit, and feel reasonably happy about the result.

Next turn is "make or break" time.

Allies

Good tactic with your u-boats. My two CVs, DD and strategic air counterattacked them. Elsewhere my BBs did what they could against your transports. On land I did what I could to shore up my defenses.

Under the new house rules when you take a city in the UK don't you have to declare war on the USSR within three turns?

9/15/40

Axis

Well, I have my port. Now we will see how things unfold. My land losses have been very high, although the air and naval units have done ok. Subs are also suffering.

My guess is that I should now take a turn to consolidate, repair and rest.

I have complete air superiority over the Channel, so maybe next turn I go hunting for ducks (as in the sitting variety).

In addition to capturing Portsmouth, I sunk your damaged CV and heavily damaged a British BB in the Channel. My two surface units took two step losses each, so that is not wonderful news for the Kriegsmarine, but of course it is unrealistic to expect otherwise.

I debated for awhile whether to capture a port this turn or not. You are quite right---within three turns I must DOW Russia, which will simulate a Russian political option. Of course the Russians don't have to attack, and if London has fallen, it might be unwise of them to attack. But if London has not fallen, then there will still be a lot of Germans in the UK, and a

Russian attack might make sense.

This may be a very interesting game, or it may turn out to be a very short one if I screw this up.

Allies

Well the good news is that I have less territory to worry about defending. The bad news ... it's going to be hard to reestablish a foothold in France. Unlike AH's 3R, UK still fights on after the capture of London. That's another plus.

10/5/40

Axis

Several German units were able to get across to the north side of the Thames, and London is now threatened. A sub and a BB attacked the depleted British DD and sank it.

Lots of air action, and it appears that the RAF has moved its fighters out of range. That's probably wise.

Next turn (25th Oct), I will DOW Russia. Then I guess it will take you a few turns to get Russia in some kind of shape to do anything. The somewhat bad news for the Russians is that Hungary joined the Axis, which will give me some new units and more production.

Allies

While I couldn't do much on land the Royal Navy and RAF concentrated on and sunk the German BB fleet.

On the political front, Churchill is setting up his government in exile. While London hasn't fallen yet, he along with the King George VI and the Royal Family have taken up temporary residence in Canada. Rumor has it that Churchill and his staff are making their way to Canada via Moscow. Churchill was heard mumbling about making a deal with the devil.

10/25/40

Axis

I thought I was being a bit too bold with the BB, but on the other hand, it has served its purpose now.

All of England has fallen now; just Scotland and Wales continue to maintain a precarious independence. Perhaps Hitler will permit them to remain independent, if they behave nicely :)

Romania has joined the Axis, so thankfully I have both of the important Balkan countries on my side.

I am glad to see that you are keeping your sense of humor. Actually, I don't think the Allies are in that much trouble---it's probably the Germans who have the bigger problems. Like, how do I defend North Africa? How do I invade Northern Ireland? And of course, the small problem of the USSR, which is now mobilized (I DOW'ed it this turn, as required).

Allies

Stalin launched a full scale attack against German forces in Poland and Baltic States and against Romanian forces in Romania.

Also, Churchill is vowing to fight on. The USA is still on the sidelines.

11/14/40.

Axis

Good move! I am surprised---I really didn't think the Soviets could attack any sooner than the second turn after their activation. The Germans have counter-attacked only in one area, on the northern front where there was a depleted motorized corps. It was destroyed, although at some cost to the Germans.

I quickly railed in as much stuff as I could, and there is something now that resembles a front line. Thankfully the campaign in Britain is winding down.

This should be a very entertaining game.

Allies

The Russians continued their major offensive all along the Russian Front. One way or the other I have a feeling that our game is going to be decided relatively quickly. It'll be interesting to see how it turns out.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board.

I'm currently playing a game with Happycat in which he's successfully executed Operation Sea Lion against me. It's November 1940 and he's just taken London. We're playing testing a mod primarily by Staffenberg and Happycat (with some small contribution by me). Our mod includes a house rule that the Germans must DOW Russia no later than three turns after they have captured any city in the UK or Ireland.

The Russians are attacking the Germans all along the front in Poland and Romania. Also, I was able to save most the Royal Navy and all of the RAF. I lost a DD and CV fleet. Happycat lost the German BB fleet and two u-boat fleets were heavily damaged. The Brits are now on the march in North Africa. I still have Scapa Flow and Ireland.

Yugoslavia, Greece and Norway are still neutral. I could be wrong but with Happycat tied up with Russians I don't see how he can how invade and conquer them. So, while he gained the PPs from the British Isles he's lost these (I hope). It appears that our game will be decided one way or the other fairly quickly.

As Stauffenberg explained to me the House Rule about Russia's entry after the German capture of a city in the UK counters the fact that there are no limits on German transport/invasion capacity. Happycat invaded with 10 corps (2 armor, 1 motorized and 7 infantry). That force was supported by 3 German tactical bomber wings, 2 German fighter wings, 1 Italian tactical bomber wing, and the entire German navy. I did want damage I could to his transports but he used his subs to screen and harass the Royal Navy. While they took significant damage they accomplished their mission and sunk a CV. His German BB and DD fleets provided supply for the force until he was able to capture a port. After that his BB fleet sunk a UK DD fleet but he lost that fleet in response to that attack.

I made several mistakes that left me vulnerable to a successful Sea Lion (which I'll detail after the game so as not to give away too much info to Happycat). But even with that (given our house rules) I feel that I still have a chance to win the game.

12/4/40

Axis

German counter-attacks continue, and reinforcements continue to show up on the German front line. Even the Kriegsmarine got into the act, with a DD attack on the Russian battleship.

NOTE--don't forget that this gives you an exception to our house rule governing ships in port. Because my DD was in a port hex when it attacked your BB, you are free to attack my DD even though it appears to be sheltered in a port. Of course, you might have some better targets :)

England is all but vanquished now, it's just a matter of occupying the last couple of hexes.

The battles in Poland were fierce, and one of your armor units was badly damaged. However, my losses are noticeable as well. You have more armor than me, so my only hope is that superiority in technology pays off. It's frustrating, because I have some upgrades available now for the armor and infantry, but not time to apply them. At least I upgraded a couple of Romanian corps.

Allies

The Russian continue their push with a focus up North. Severe weather in the USSR that hinders movement hit this turn. The Russian BB fleet counterattacked your German DD fleet.

In North Africa, the Brits continued their march West.

No other action to report.

***NOTE BY HAPPYCAT:** and here, then was my first major mistake. If you read the previous Axis comment I said England was "all but vanquished". Later in the game, I very much regretted my decision to ignore Northern Ireland. I thought it was just a minor annoyance. How wrong I was!*

12/24/40

Axis

It's ironic that the Russian winter is screwing the Russians, and not the Germans. Boy, this is like WW1. Not much maneuver, just attrition. This turn I managed to eliminate an armor corps and an infantry corps. Both air forces have suffered more attrition, yours perhaps a bit more than mine, but it's close.

Allies

I destroyed an Italian garrison in North Africa.

In Russia the war of attrition continues. The Russia winter doesn't have much of an impact on me either. Most of my forces are not in Russia. This is definitely a different game.

1/13/41

Axis

Another Russian armor bit the dust. More air battles, and more attrition to land units. I haven't built much in the way of new units yet, because I am spending so much on extra rail movement, transport and repairs.

Sea Lion was a really bad idea, both historically and in this game. The difference is that the Germans were bright enough not to do it :)

I still would like to play this out, but I don't think there is a chance in hell of a German offensive in 1941. What I think will happen is that the line will solidify about where it is now, Romania will hang on for a few more turns, and then at some point in late summer of 1941, there will be enough Russians that you will be able to start your drive on Berlin.

It should be fun to see if you can do this before the Americans enter the war.

Oh, I almost forgot---a u-boat attacked the Russian BB, and the Romanian DD finally came out to play.

Allies

The Brits attacked Tobruk. The garrison was reduced to a step 6.

On the Russia front, I made a few (not many) attacks. It does appear that the line is stabilizing. I want to play out this game also to see what happens. It's a good playtest for the mod. I was hoping that the Russians could have pushed a little further by now and also destroyed more of your units.

In a typical game at this point I'd be on the defensive in Egypt, trying to get my Russian defense in place before a German DOW and worrying about Sea Lion and trying to fight off subs in the Atlantic. But in our game I don't have any of those considerations. The Brits are on the offensive in Libya, the Russians are attacking in Poland and Romania and the convoy routes are much easier to protect; especially given the damage that your u-boats suffered. This is definitely not a lonely time for the Brits as would be in a game without Sea Lion. When you started Sea Lion I was kind of bummed out ... however, win or lose this has turn into a very interesting and enjoyable game. The fact that the UK still fight on even after London has fallen still makes them a force to reckon with.

2/2/41

Axis

Yes, this is a very different game. Britain occupied, yet triumphant in North Africa. Germany triumphant in the west, yet on the ropes in the east.

This turn, Romanian and Italian forces recaptured Ploesti, and further north a couple of small attacks with limited objectives. I don't feel like I'm out of the woods yet

Allies

The Brits took Tobruk and reduced the garrison in Benghazi a few steps. The fighter at Malta bombed your convoy reducing it by 1-step.

On the Russian front ... not much action. Only two real attacks. One in Romanian and one in Prussia.

2/22/41

Axis

A small attack in Romania, which pushed your unit back. Then I was lucky, and a (pro-German) partisan popped up in the front line in Romania.

In the north, I straightened out the line, and eliminated one garrison unit.

Britain still has a few hexes that are not German controlled, but they are becoming fewer and fewer.

Allies

Not much to report. The Brits took Benghazi. On the Russian front no action except bombardment by the Russian BB and DD against a Romanian garrison. I see you upgraded your German armor. It looks like my offensive on the Russian front has stalled.

3/14/41

Axis

I reinforced the area around Bucharest a bit, and near Cluj ran a minor operation to reduce the threat to that city.

In the north, a major air offensive was launched against one of the Russian tank corps, resulting in its destruction. I guessed from the losses that you had taken in recent turns that I would have air superiority in every sense of the word, and so it seems to be. This is of course the Russian weakness in 1941---air is technologically inferior, and effectiveness ratings and experience lag far behind that of the Luftwaffe.

Soon enough that will start to change, but for now I'm going to enjoy it.

No action elsewhere.

Allies

Wow. I didn't realize that with airpower alone you could destroy a Russian tank corps! I thought it was safe behind the front lines. Not much action. I can't wait for US entry. The rest of 1941 is going to be a tough year for both the Brits and the Russians.

4/3/41

Axis

Tactical air kills about 3 steps each when there is such a disparity in tech as we have at the moment. Of course, if your fighters were able to intercept, I probably would not have been so bold because the economics would have been poor. If it costs me 4 or 5 steps of air to kill an armour, that gets expensive for me to repair. And it sucks up oil like crazy.

This turn I eliminated three garrison units; one in the north, and another couple down by Cluj.

Ultimately, I think Russian manpower and production will be my doom, but I think you're right in that 1941 will be a tough for the Allies. It will be interesting to see if I can make any progress into Russia.

Allies

A quiet turn. Not much action.

4/23/41

Axis

A major German offensive commenced in the northern sector between Warsaw and Konigsberg, and also some heavy fighting south of Warsaw. The Romanian portion of the front was quiet.

A number of Russian units were eliminated, and there now appears to be a threat of encirclement for some of the units which were bypassed.

My losses were moderate to light, although one motorized unit suffered 40% losses during its attack.

Allies

No combat on the Russian front except for a BB bombardment in the Black Sea. I'm just trying to stabilize my defensive line there.

The RAF hit the Italian garrison in Tripoli in force.

Nothing else to report.

5/13/41

Axis

More combat in the northern sector, with the destruction of a few Russian infantry corps.

Only a bit of action in the centre and south, and nothing elsewhere.

It looks like Africa will be free of Axis occupation soon.

Allies

The Russians launched a major counterattack in the north. Manstein's tank corps was destroyed and he was injured and will be out for several turns. The Italian tank corps

was also attacked. It lost 4-steps and retreated. I launched a couple of other attacks with limited/no success. The remainder of my focus in Russia was to stabilize their front defensive line.

The RAF continued their air attacks against the Italian garrison in Tripoli. Nothing else to report.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board.

It's a game. But I will tell you this mod that Stauffenberg and Happycat has been developing over the past several months and which I've been helping them playtest over the last 2 1/2 months is a blast! It has greatly increased my gaming experience. I feel that it more accurately reflects the flow of the actual war if players wish to play it that way. If not, I feel that it produces historically possible results. And, most importantly I feel it greatly enhances replayability. Every game is different and it appears there is no one strategy that guarantees victory.

In my game against Happycat it's May 13, 1941. He had just launched a major offensive in northern Poland against the Russians. The northern line was about to crumble and Russian troops were endangered of encirclement. However, I had pulled back and repaired the Russian airforce, tank corps and motorized corps. I launched a major counteroffensive destroying Manstein's tank corps and knocking him out of the game for several turns. I also inflicted 4-steps of losses on the Italian tank corps. While this is a blow to Happycat I've put my quality Russia corps at risk. Two turns ago he destroyed a 10-step Russian tank corps that was behind the front line using air alone. That was unexpected and an eye opener.

The Brits, while having lost most of their home islands are still fighting. They're on the verge of taking Tripoli and all of Libya. At this point in a typical game (one without Sea Lion) the UK would have their defensive line around El Alamein and would be trying to hold on. They still hold onto Northern Ireland and Scapa Flow. While battered the UK is still around and fighting.

Who will win? I don't have a clue, but I do know that I still have a chance. Now this is what I call an enjoyable gaming experience. This is also what I call replayability. I've never experience a CEaW (or AH's 3rd Reich) game like this before and I dare say Happycat hasn't either.

6/2/41

Axis

Well done! I did not want to lose Manstein. This all started last turn, when I ran my offensive. The intention was to destroy some of your infantry, and to leave one armor a bit exposed so that if you had armor in the area, it would reveal itself. But I stupidly moved the wrong unit (with Manstein) and even more stupidly left it TOO exposed.

The only thing that worked out was that at least I killed two of your armor this turn. However, spending another 100 pp's for a new leader was not part of the plan.

I just missed the Murmansk convoy, so you got 71 pp's added to your treasury this turn. That will certainly help the Russians.

This is getting to be very bloody!

Allies

You're very good at giving me bait I can't resist. Like the wolfpack prior to the launch of Sea Lion and last turn. I did commit two more of my tank corps in a counterattack against one of your Panzer corps. I'm sure they'll suffer the ultimate fate but then did inflict 5-steps of loss. A couple more attacks here and there on the Russia front with some success.

The Brits took Tripoli and now Libya belongs to them. The UK strategic bomber hit Birmingham. That hurts me almost as much as Sea Lion. British bombing their own cities but they're doing what they can to harass the Germans.

6/22/41

Axis

As you predicted, the two Russian tank corps are now extinct. Also, Brest-Litovsk has fallen to the Axis.

I think it is important to keep me on my toes in the UK. Knowing that you have a bomber and a fighter off-shore, makes me aware that Northern Ireland is a potential launching pad for an Allied invasion of the British Isles.

Probably not likely until the USA enters the war, but I can't afford to ignore the threat, even now.

How is the British economy doing? You must be getting lots of convoys through, 'cuz I'm sure not sinking any.

Allies

Good move. My defensive line is crumbling east and north of Warsaw. The good news is that 1/2 of 1941 is gone and it's 6-months to USA entry. The bad news is that it's 6-months to USA entry. A very interesting game indeed.

7/12/41

Axis

Interestingly, the German position right now is not that much different than it would be if I had not invaded England. My losses are much higher than in previous games, but so are the Russians. I have perhaps one less tactical air and one less armor than I would normally have in July of 1941, but more Italian air than normal. Plus, the experience ratings of the air units are almost off the scale. These units are elite, and even when depleted can get the better of a full strength Russian fighter. My tactical air has, on occasion, flown unescorted and taken less losses than the intercepting Russian.

This turn Lvov was occupied, and a few more Russian units have been eliminated or depleted.

The thing that I think will help the Allies is the fact that I have to defend the UK, France, Italy; plus, try to maintain an offensive in Russia. This will be difficult.

Allies

Not much to report. I'm just trying to stabilize the Russian front which right now is an impossible task.

8/1/41

Axis

Only a bit of action this turn; I had LOTS to repair.

Allies

No action on the Russia front except for a BB bombardment and a desperation attack by a surrounded and out of supply garrison. In 1940 I didn't want the Russian winter to start. Now in 1941 I can't wait. Hurry up winter.

The Brits however are trying to stir up some trouble. The RAF and even the Royal naval carried out attacks. The strategic bomber continued its bombing campaign against Birmingham (that still hurts ... a British bomber bombing a British city). The UK fighter attacked the Italian fighter followed by a UK BB attack against it.

8/21/41

Axis

Odessa and Minsk are now in German hands, but little else happened this turn. I have to keep my advance in better order from now on, because I do not have a very good picture yet of what lies beyond the Dnieper. Probably nothing good...

Allies

No action on the Russian front except by a BB bombardment.

In the British Isles the UK continued their air and naval attacks. The strategic bomber switched targets and hit Liverpool.

In the Med, I tried again to inflict some damage on your Italian BB in port. I got the worst of that exchange.

9/10/41

Axis

This turn Pskov was captured, and the Murmansk convoy lost six pp's. You also lost a couple of garrison units.

Allies

No action this turn. You really have my Russian forces on the run. I see you withdrew the Italian fighter.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board

In my game against Happycat, I had gambled and lost that he wouldn't launch Sea Lion. Instead of keeping a reserve of PPs and deploying the Canadian fighter to the UK I decided to gamble and get a head start on research, naval builds and UK build up in Egypt. I also went after his u-boats to gain control of the sea. Happycat used them as bait to draw the Royal Navy away when he launched Sea Lion. When I realized what was happening they sortied and did cause some damage but couldn't prevent him from landing in force. If I had had a PP reverse I could have built infantry corps and garrisons to better protect London and UK ports. Also if the Royal Navy had been in better position I could have sunk his BB and DD fleet cutting off supply to the German troops when they did land. So as soon Happycat DOW Russia I launched everything I could at him. I railed every quality unit I had west. I had some success but Happycat stabilized his line and is now on the offensive. Last turn was August 21, 1941. Here are the casualties (men; tanks; air; ships), Germany=(2,019,436; 2548; 2158; 250), Italians=(362,592; 416; 650; 0) & Russia=(4,139,592; 5408; 1742; 0). The UK, while having lost most of the British Isles, are still a factor. They have conquered all of Libya.

They still hold onto Scapa Flow and Northern Ireland. Currently, they are launch air and naval attacks against the Italian fighter stationed there. They remainder of the axis air (as far as I know) is on the Russian front. This kills me but a UK strategic bomber has been hammering Birmingham and Liverpool. My assessment in terms of who's winning is that Happycat has the upper hand. However, I feel I still have a significant chance. What that chance is I don't know but my gut tells me it's at least 20 to 25%. Now that's FUN and that's a game worth playing out. In the vanilla game it'd be over now. Russia would still be neutral if Germany was ready yet. Germany would have little losses, probably have conquered Egypt and would have a massive ground and air force ready to crush Russia. In addition to being more fun I feel that the former is more historically realistic than the latter.

Three things I did accomplish by the immediate Russian attacks were that I saved Northern Ireland and Scapa Flow, I was able to take Libya and I've inflicted significant casualties on the Germans. While it may be a 70 to 75% chance that I'll lose I'm still in the game and have a foothold close to Britain.

Happycat has this tendency to give me both valuable information and credible disinformation in his emails describing his turn. In one game I played he kept hinting about launching Sea Lion and I beefed up defenses in the UK and kept the Royal Navy close by. Then when he didn't launch Sea Lion he hinted about starting Barbarossa early and I hustled building and deploying infantry at the expense of research labs and saving for leaders. He attacked the Balkans instead. In our current game (as you well know) he hinted about Sea Lion and actually carried it off. When he first starting hinting about it I ignored it and instead focused on beefing up the Royal Navy, research and building up the defenses in the Med. When I realized he was serious about it and that I ws woefully unprepared for it I had two BBs in route to the Med that I immediately recalled to Britain. I had the bulk of the Royal Navy between the West coast of Britain and Ireland. Still I wasn't fully convinced of Sea Lion. He attacked a convoy just of Ireland's West Coast with all his u-boats I knew of (three) and within range of the bulk of the Royal Navy. I couldn't resist and sortied and did significant damage. However, he used his u-boats as bait and launched Sea Lion that turn. I tried to get back and attack his transports but he used his depleted u-boats to block access to the channel and shield his BB and DD supporting (i.e., providing supply for) the invasion. I was able to inflict significant damage on 4 of his 10 invasion transports in the initial wave. That wasn't enough, he got ashore and crushed my meager and ill prepared defense. Over several turns the battle raged on land and at sea. At sea, he lost a u-boat and his BB. His DD and another u-boat were seriously damage. I lost a DD and CV. When it became apparent that I couldn't stop him I withdrew to save the remainder of the Royal Navy and all of the RAF. The Russians attack in Poland and this saved Northern Ireland and Scapa Flow from the Germans. This also allowed me to capture Libya unopposed except for the garrisons initially deployed there.

9/30/41

Axis

This turn, Germans occupied Bryansk, Talinn and Dnepropetrovsk. Two u-boats attacked the Murmansk convoy, and that's about it.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board

Uh oh. RKR1958 has "outed" me. Yes, I must admit that at times, a little disinformation can be helpful. I find that when I play the Axis side I get into character, and become quite the little fibber, just like a certain Propaganda Minister.

I never misrepresent what went on in the turn just finished when providing my narrative, but sometimes I just can't resist hinting at what my next move might be. The trick, of course, is to tell the truth often enough that your opponent then does not know what to believe, and what not to believe.

It's an art, really

Allies

The UK counterattacked with a DD and BB against your two subs. I know it was a weak counterattack but they did what they had to do. No other action to report. Where did all those tanks come from! I need an early winter!

10/20/41

Axis

No winter yet I'm afraid.

The Axis forces have surged ahead in the centre, as air reconnaissance shows them that there is little danger. Some of the corps units that were retreating in front of them are now destroyed.

Further north, caution is being exercised. Air reconnaissance there shows a completely different picture. Moscow has a ring of steel around it and does not look easy.

Allies

No action from me on the Russian front except for my usual BB bombardment.

The UK strategic bomber hit Liverpool again. The Italian fighter sortied and lost 2 steps the UK fighter lost 1.

Nothing to report at sea.

11/9/41

Axis

Axis air reduced the power of the annoying Russian battleship. Hopefully it goes away soon!

In the north, air again in action, picking on one of your infantry corps south-west of Moscow. And, a small land action near Leningrad.

Otherwise, the whole turn was about adjusting my line.

Allies

Nothing to report this turn. This game that was a slug fest has turned into a one sided jab. I hope I keep standing long enough to start fighting back. Where is that famous Russian Winter?

11/29/41

Axis

No winter yet, but I don't imagine it will be long in coming.

This turn I attacked the Murmansk convoy. It wasn't big to begin with, and it's a lot smaller now (one pp left). Also occupied Voronezh and Rostov, which were both empty of course.

South of Moscow I destroyed one infantry corps, and there were air battles connected with that fight. Your fighters are getting somewhat depleted in strength.

I also eliminated a garrison next to Leningrad (on the Russian side of Leningrad) and the city is now cut off from the rest of Russia. That does not affect its supply, I don't think...

That's about it. Winter will be your salvation I think.

Allies

The Russians counterattacked. They destroyed two German infantry corps and reduced a Hungarian corps to a step 1. Also, I understand that Partisans might be operating behind your lines.

The Brits are eagerly awaiting USA entry. So are the Russians. Where is that Russian winter!

12/19/41

Axis

The partisan has met the fate waiting for all who rebel against German rule.

Good counter-attack, 29 step-losses is a noticeable loss.

This turn, I concentrated on destroying Russian front line units in the area north-west of Tula. This allowed me to straighten that section of the front line.

Other Axis units are driving west and south as quickly as they can before the Russian winter arrives. At the same time, reinforcements were delivered to the Tula-Moscow front, as well as the Leningrad front. A rumor is circulating that Rommel has arrived at the Moscow front.

In the UK, the Luftwaffe bombed a British transport that was poking around at Scapa Flow. Losses were less than hoped for, so much for Goering's promises to keep the skies and seas around the UK clear of enemy activity.

No winter yet, and no Americans.

Allies

The Russians continued their counteroffensive as best as they could.

The Brits reestablished their presence in the mountains of northern Scotland. Partisans are active in Russia. Japan attacked the USA and Germany declared war on the USA. I still don't understand that one. I think the Russian winter has started but I glanced away when that message might have popped up.

Stalin wishes to extend to Hitler and the Germany people his best wishes and a great gift. If the German armed forces immediately agree to withdraw to their pre-war borders Stalin will stop his counteroffensive. Otherwise, the Russian army will continue their annihilation of the German army inside Russia and his plans to be in Berlin this time next year. What will it be Peace or Annihilation?

1/8/42

Axis

Winter had not arrived at the beginning of this turn, but it arrived at the end. So you may have some opportunities.

I captured Tula this turn, which was critical if I am to be able to rail new units to the front. In the south, I captured the Maikop oil field.

Partisans are a hassle to deal with, and of course every new city I capture in Russia has to have a garrison, which takes away MORE manpower.

In the UK, the Luftwaffe dealt a heavy blow to a transport arriving at Belfast (with fighters on board). It was also attacked by a u-boat. It's down to 3 or 4 steps now.

After careful consideration, Hitler instructed Ribbentrop to decline Stalin's offer, and instead invite him to surrender.

Allies

The Russian winter and US entry finally got here but it's going to take a miracle for Russia to hold on and for UK/US to take back Britain and France. Given your airpower I wouldn't have had a chance without a foothold in Northern Ireland and Scapa Flow. Instead of being impossible these objectives are now highly improbable.

The Russians continued their counteroffensive around Moscow. The UK continued their activities and the US is just getting started.

1/28/42

Axis

I didn't do much in Russia this turn, as my efficiency is still a bit low. However, I am getting a handle on the partisans at least. And the armor near Gorki attacked your defender; he retreated into Gorki (good placement of the unit!)

In the UK, I bombed the newly landed infantry in the Highlands, and he lost 4 steps.

You're doing a good job of keeping me busy everywhere that you can; manpower and fuel are problems now.

Allies

The Russians continued their counteroffensive. They destroyed a German motorized corps, knocked down the infantry corps in Tula to 1-step and depleted a couple of other corps. The UK continued their landings in the mountains of northern Scotland and bombed one of your transports.

Stalin wants Hitler to know that he's working on a secret weapon that will make it winter in Russia all year long. He is close to completing this wonder weapon and warns the Germany army that they should leave Russia now or suffer the fate Napoleon and his army suffered over 100 years ago.

2/12/42

Axis

You're bleeding the Germans slowly but surely to death in Russia. I think that they have advanced as far as they can go until spring, and after that, who knows. I pulled back a bit from Gorki, and concentrated on straightening out my line near Moscow. Only one front line unit of yours stubbornly refused to die, but it's down to 3 steps.

The tactical air units in the UK took a terrible toll from the two British units in Scotland. It's really hard to get a foothold when you don't have

air superiority (as I am finding out in the Med against Borger---I was hoping to land Allied forces on Crete, but he has fighters on Rhodes, Crete, southern Greece and even in Libya that can reach my assault forces, so I have to re-think that one).

I tried bombing your BB in Batumi, but got no result.

Winter truly is Russia's best friend in this game. If I had clear weather right now, I would be able to move more forces towards Moscow, but right now the movement rates suck

Allies

The British foothold in northern Scotland is slipping. They're holding on with all they have.

The Russians made a couple of attacks. I see that you pulled back and are regrouping. There's no way I'm leaving my positions and coming after you. Reports are that there are new partisan activities behind your lines and the weather forecast calls for continued winter.

***NOTE BY HAPPYCAT:** and here, then was my SECOND major mistake. If I had kept pushing around Moscow, I later learned that my opponent feels that his position would have fallen apart. But, thanks to the fog of war, I never knew, until too late, how close I came to eliminating Russia.*

3/9/42

Axis

I was able to eliminate one of your corps in Scotland, and then a combined air and submarine attack on your transport in Scapa Flow knocked it down to three steps. In the process, your intercepting fighter from the Orkney Islands took a terrible beating. It must be at a very low effectiveness I would guess.

In Russia, I did some repairing, adjusting of the lines, and focused on one goal---kill more steps than I lose. So I was able to eliminate three corps near Moscow without suffering much in the way of losses myself (thanks to air power).

The pain-in-the-butt partisan gave as good as he got, and obviously will need more attention if I'm going to get rid of him.

Stalingrad was unoccupied---until now. The Germans have claimed the city, and knocked over the statue of Stalin. The production from that city will be nice, but oil would be even nicer. The problem with using submarines, tanks and aircraft is that they don't run on water.

Allies

Good use of your u-boats. Your hidden u-boat killed off the depleted motorized corps when I tried to evacuate it. The UK strategic bomber hit the other u-boat fleet reducing it by 4-steps.

On the Russian front the only action was a counterattack against an Italian infantry corps near Moscow. It was reduced by 5-steps. Nothing else to speak of.

3/29/42

Axis

The British foothold in Scotland has been eradicated, for now. I don't expect that I have seen the last of them however, plus it worries me that I have not seen Americans anywhere yet.

I didn't do much in Russia, except eliminate a partisan in the north. The one in the south is still around---my infantry had 3-1 odds, but I was the one who lost the battle (2 step losses!). The German forces around Leningrad moved a bit, just to create some elbow room.

This is an unusual game of CEAW. Germany holds lots of territory, appears to have the initiative, yet in many respects is on the defensive already.

You are certainly doing a great job of defending Moscow. My guess is that it will survive now, because I cannot afford to leave the big gaps I currently have on the front (e.g. between Moscow and Leningrad).

Allies

The weather report from the Russian front is that the severe winter will continue. Also, there are reports of partisan activity in the UK! A UK submarine fleet ran across and tracked a German u-boat fleet. This fleet was attacked and destroyed by elements of the RAF and Royal Navy (strategic air and DD). RAF and German fighter planes also battled in the air over Scotland. The RAF launched a raid against the northern most German fighter base.

While PM Churchill regrets the loss of the British invasion force in northern Scotland he issued a statement saying that this is a temporary set back and that he and the Americans will return to free all of England and France.

Getting out of character now. :-) I knew that I didn't have the air power to sustain my foothold in northern Scotland if you decided to respond. If you didn't then that would have been a gift. If you did, and I knew you would, then this would hopefully take some pressure off the Russians and give me time to beef up their defenses (as best as I could).

Two things that I really love about CEaW over AH Third Reich is how air and naval are much less abstract. I've found that having parity with or superiority over your opponent at sea and in the air is absolutely necessary for invasions and major offensives to have a chance to succeed. This is the way it should be.

4/18/42

Axis

The partisan in Russia is down to two steps now, so he is certainly doing his job. The one in the UK is looking like it will be equally stubborn.

In the USSR, some movement and repairing/upgrading, and one attack on a Soviet corps near Tula. OKW was extremely disappointed that the attack failed in its objective (which was to eliminate a Soviet corps---it hangs on with ONE step).

German forces in the UK destroyed a British DD unit, and also depleted a British sub. The Luftwaffe managed to gain the upper hand, for the moment at least, in its air war with the RAF operating out of Northern Ireland.

I agree with your assessment of this game having captured the flavor of the air and naval aspects of WW2. AH's Third Reich will always be a sentimental favourite, but I don't really care for the abstractions. Incidentally, I was a play-tester for the computer rendition of Third Reich (it never achieved any success, due to its abysmal AI.) If you

Google my name together with "Third Reich" or "Avalon Hill", you might also be able to find an article I wrote for Avalon Hill's magazine "The General" (a strategy article for the computer version---really, a strategy article was not needed; you would have to be the worst war gamer in the world to lose against the AI).

Anyway, that was my 15 minutes of fame!

Allies

The fierce naval and air battle off the east coast of Scotland continued. The Brits sent two BBs and one CV in harms way to counterattack German naval forces there. The RAF and Royal Navy combined to reduce the German surface fleet (DD) to 3 steps and one of the two u-boat fleets to 3-steps.

No action on the Russian front. The Russian's are taking advantage of winter to repair, regroup and reinforce. The weather forecast there calls for winter to continue.

I did google your name and Avalon Hill. I found a reference to your article in the General, "Knocking on the Back Door" but couldn't a link to the article itself. Do you have one? I'd like to read it.

5/8/42

Axis

The most damaged u-boat snuck off, but was replaced by another, so the battle at sea continues. The British sub was depleted by one air attack, and then a couple of u-boats teamed up with the Luftwaffe to deplete your BB a little more. I expect I will take some damage from the CV and your strategic air, but I think the Germans need to continue contesting the air and sea space around the UK.

In Russia, I conducted a couple of air attacks on one infantry near Tula (it lost 3 steps), and a ground assault without air support took Novgorod from the Russians.

That's about it.

Allies

The air and naval battle off the east coast of Scotland continues. The two German u-boat fleets there were reduced to 6-steps & 7-steps; respectively. The Russians launched some counterattacks inflicting step losses on three German units.

5/28/42

Axis

My u-boats see US Navy ships, and have decided that the North Sea is no longer a safe environment. There was no action in the UK this turn; I needed to do repairs and upgrades.

In Russia, some Luftwaffe units bombed your front line units, with minimal results. In the south, I captured another oilfield, and am close to cutting off the south. I think you will still be able to deploy newly built units there, but the rail connection will soon be cut (I hope).

Your forces in the north near Moscow are starting to look respectable again

Allies

The USA air corps got into action this turn and did some bombing. The Russians took this turn to repair and redeploy.

I have a transport loaded with a fighter docked in the port at Belfast.

6/17/42

Axis

Your transport with the fighter only lost three steps. I elected not to attack with a submarine, because my skippers are averse to committing suicide (even though only one land-based air could attack my sub, I felt that the chances of a follow-up attack by a DD were fairly high).

In Russia, I continued my advance in the south, although I see there is now a Russian corps in my way. In the north, one of the garrisons north of Leningrad was roughed up, and another unit closer to Moscow was also beaten up. One of my attacking corps in that second attack was also badly damaged.

Allies

The RAF is taking a beating in trying to get parity with the Germans in the air. No action over Scotland/UK. There are reports of Partisan activity in the UK.

In Russia they counterattacked the weakened German infantry corps and destroyed it. Also, they launch a couple more counterattacks in that had little impact.

7/7/42

Axis

A fairly strong offensive has begun near Moscow, and the front line has a few bulges in it. Near Leningrad, I also conducted some attacks, but the results there were only so-so.

In the south, I captured Astrakhan, and there was combat near Batumi. My attack at sea did not go well--I expected to sink your poor little BB, but instead my full strength DD unit took more losses.

I think the Russian front is now at a critical stage---the next two turns will either see a lot of Russian units destroyed, or you will surprise me with hidden reserves and I will be retreating by the end of the summer.

The partisan in the UK is toast (I hit him with everything I could, just to be sure). It wasn't nice of him to pop up next to all my air bases.

Taken for a post on the Slitherine Board

In one PBEM I am now playing, my Allied opponent has lost any hope of competing with the Germans in the air, and his armor is either all gone, or at least gone from the Moscow front. His front line is badly fragmented. Even so, I find that if I stick my neck out too far, he is still capable of chopping at it in a very noticeable way. And as Stauffenberg has noted, it takes pocketed units a long time to decay. With twenty day turns, I can't afford to sit around for three or four turns waiting for the odds to improve---better to kill them head-on with the first attack.

Allies

Nothing to report. Only one small counterattack in the Southern Russia. I'm just trying to hold on.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board

O.K., that's our game (see Sea Lion thread) ... my estimate for victory has gone from 20 to 25% (earlier) to < 5%. But hey, I still have a chance and I'm not going down without a fight. Also, I think I'm still making the game interesting for Happycat.

7/27/42

Axis

Killed one partisan, and ignored the other for the moment. I didn't do much this turn, as I had lots of units to upgrade, but I did engage in some offensive action in the far south. Also eliminated a garrison near Leningrad.

Taken for a post on the Slitherine Board

Interesting indeed! My manpower quality is slipping, I have barely enough oil to fry a bratwurst, never mind running several panzer corps, and I am still waiting for the US to show up on the other front. Sea Lion was probably an idea best abandoned Smile I guess it's too late to give England back? (Laughing)

Allies

I'm taking advantage of the Axis lull to rest and repair. No action at all this turn.

Taken from a post on the Slitherine Board

Shocked I accept! And while we're at it could I have France back too?

8/16/42

Axis

I have occupied Batumi, and eliminated the pain-in-the-ass partisans. Also an attack was made by the Luftwaffe on the Russian BB, for a one step hit.

Not much else on that front.

In the UK, I was repositioning some subs, and one of them collided with yours off of Scotland. That collision cost me two steps, so I returned the favor with one air attack. I also got into some air combat over Northern Ireland, but I feel like I took the worst of it. The fun times are over for the Luftwaffe, I think. Your tech levels are about the same as mine now.

Allies

No action in Russia. Would you please leave the poor Russian BB alone! It's just trying to survive. By the way there are reports of partisan activities in Russia. I guess they don't like you picking on their poor BB either. :-)

There were fierce air battles over Scotland and the surrounding seas. American TAC bomber hit your exposed u-boat fleet and reducing it to -steps. The German fighter wing intercepted and was in turn intercept by a UK fighter wing. An American fighter wing then attacked the base of that German fighter. Overall it was reduced to 5-steps. One UK fighter suffered 2 step losses and the second 3. I guess all in all the air battle was a draw and the USA won the sea battle against the sub. This is one interesting game. I've been fighting for my life since the fall of 1940.

9/5/42

Axis

This turn Italian troops entered Grozny, and the local Commissar shot himself. At the other end of Russia, Leningrad has been reduced to only two steps, and the Commissar there is loading his pistol :)

In between those two widely separated points, not a heck of a lot else going on.

In the UK, my damaged u-boat managed to bump into an American sub, and took one step loss. Tactical air retaliated, and took two steps from the American. Another tactical air unit attacked a depleted British fighter, and lost three steps for a gain of only one step off of the Brit. I'm not going to win the air war with these kinds of exchanges.

Allies

Action in all three fronts this turn. The fierce air battle continued over Scotland and the surrounding sea. It all started off with a UK strategic bomber hitting your exposed u-boat and reducing it to 1-step.

A German fighter intercepted but in turn was intercept by a UK fighter.

The base of this fighter was attacked. US tactical and strategic bombers hit German tactical bomber and fighter bases.

In the Med the UK fighter on Malta attacked the German tac bomber in Sicily. The German fighter at the base of Italy intercept. All three air units took 2-step losses each.

The Russians launch a minor offensive against two Italian infantry corps. One was destroyed and the other was reduced to 4-steps. The Russians have lost the oil fields in southern Russia. However, the in-supply partisan attacked a garrison. Also, a badly depleted garrison attacked a German tactical bomber. No losses were inflicted but it made the Russians feel better.

9/25/42

Axis

The Axis line in Russia is now starting to be re-configured for optimum defense in winter. Also, Leningrad has fallen, freeing up more Axis units for the expected Soviet winter offensive. One Russian partisan was eliminated, but the one near Rostov is still alive---maybe not for long, as an armored corps has moved into the area :)

It will be interesting to do a post-mortem after this game is over, to see what intelligence we each lacked. For example, there are vast areas of Russia where you don't know my strength and same goes for me. And I am really wondering where the Red Air Force is. I notice a very large convoy got through to Russia this turn, which is bad news for me.

Allies

Repairs and a couple of air attacks. One was against your 1-step u-boat, which survived! The other was against the German tactical bomber in Sicily.

The Russian airforce is undergoing extensive training. It touching that the Germans miss them. Hopefully they'll be able to surprise them soon.

10/15/42

Axis

That u-boat is a survivor! I tried moving it again, and hit another American sub. The US sub lost a step, and mine is still around!

Other than eliminating the partisan in Russia, no action.

Allies

A UK BB finally took out the sub. British air and sea rescue pick up the u-boat commander. He's some what of a hero for surviving so long. It looks like he's being shipped to Canada and will wait out the rest of the war there in comfort.

The Russians launched a minor offensive and retook the city of Tambov destroying the garrison there. They also made a couple more minor attacks.

11/4/42

Axis

The u-boat commander reached Canada, and promptly escaped. Rumor has it he is trying to make his way south through the US, to Mexico, where he hopes to reach the German Embassy. RCMP and FBI have received numerous tips, but nothing solid. It is known that he has distant cousins in Milwaukee, but whether he is heading there or not is anybody's guess.

In Russia, the Axis forces have made major adjustments in the front line, moving to winter positions.

No action in the UK or Atlantic.

Allies

The u-boat commander turned himself in to the FBI. After his escape he found relatives he had in Milwaukee and they convinced him to not try to get back to Nazi Germany. Since his surrender he has renounced Hitler and the Nazi party. He refuses to give any information other than that required by the Geneva Convention. Out of respect for his military record the USA military intelligence is not pushing hard for other information. He is now in a Federal low security detention center. He knows that he can never go back to Nazi Germany since his renunciation. However, he looks forward to returning to his country after Hitler and Nazi's are gone. To that objective the USA and UK have vowed to help.

The only action to speak of in the west was bombardment of the German Infantry corps in northern Scotland.

In Russia, the Russians troops reoccupied Tula and a number of hexes vacated by the Germans. However, they proceeded cautiously and even so are much fearful of a trap.

11/24/42

Axis

Winter arrived this turn in Russia, so our movement rates are severely curtailed. I think this helps me more than you at the moment, as I have already reached my defensive positions and can start building up efficiency again.

In the UK, the Luftwaffe bombed a British BB down to six steps, and two u-boats attacked an American CV. Each sub lost two steps, and the CV lost a total of four. During the attack on the BB, fighters clashed, and I think the edge went to the Allies.

Allies

I'm really beginning not to like your u-boats! The both got attacked. One got severely reduced the other was knocked down to 7-steps. Also, 2

US fighters attacked German and Italian fighter bases in Scotland. In Russia, no action. Also, partisans appeared in the UK.

12/14/42

Axis

I tried to move both u-boats, but could not because of subs. If I am completely surrounded, then I can't move, but of course you can't attack. However, if, as I suspect, you have cleverly left an opening for each sub, then tough luck for me.

The Axis air units in Britain worked on reducing partisan activity, and succeeded, but one of my tactical air units took a terrible beating. Britain is no fun anymore :(

Not much in Russia, except I tried bombing your BB again. No luck. I also bombed a couple of your front line infantry, but not much damage was done.

Allies

A lot happened this turn. First one of your u-boat fleets discovered several Allied transports. The code name for this operation is ORCA now that the cat is out of the bag. The two northern u-boat fleets, which did have an escape, were destroyed. A BB escort for the transports ran into your u-boat fleet that discovered the Allied transports. It paid a price with a CV following up the "attack" by the BB. A savage air battle took place over the skies of Scotland. I went after your tactical bombers and fighters. I got lucky with one fighter attack against a depleted tac bomber. The UK/USA took heavy losses in the sky but in return the Germans lost one tactical bomber air wing and one fighter air wing and one other fighter air wing and tactical bomber wing were heavily damaged.

The Russians did what they could. They took back one city and depleted a garrison in another. No other action except to move forward in typical Russia fashion.

1/3/43

Axis

Your invasion force looks like it might ruin Manstein's day (he became the commander of UK forces, after his recovery from his wounds.) Goring is not at all happy about how the Luftwaffe fared against the RAF and USAAF attacks. While I can replace these losses, I can't replace the experience. My major problem now is manpower, as it is hovering around 50%. Already, I suffer a one point loss in quality, and soon I will probably start seeing a one point drop in survivability for new German units. (At this rate, the Italians will become more powerful).

How is the Russian manpower? I would expect that despite your losses, it's not a problem.

As you might expect, there was no action this turn.

Allies

The Russians made a few attacks and destroyed a garrison. Two things the Russians have that they never seem to run out of are manpower and oil. So their manpower is just fine.

The western Allies chose Orca for the Allied invasion because Orca's are predators of Sea Lions. There was quite a bit of discussion at the Allied High Command over this name. Some were afraid that if German intelligence picked it up in radio traffic that they might figure out what was happening. However, PM Churchill was on

unyielding and convinced President Roosevelt to go along with the name. Allied High Command is hoping that Orca doesn't become a beached whale! Also, there was some long term operation in planning call Overlord. I'm not sure what that one's about?

Orca whales are predators of Sea Lions. The codename Orca was chosen for the operation as a metaphor for taking back England, which was lost to Operation Sea Lion.

1/23/43

Axis

I reoccupied Smolensk, and destroyed one of your units. German tech is really good, but some of my new units...well, the quality and survivability is tragic. You can bet you won't see many of them on the front line :)

Ha---I never figured that out, and I should have considering how long I lived on the west coast. Orca-Sea Lion---I love it. Overlord is a silly name however; I would change it.

Oh, I also got rid of the Russian partisan.

Allies

The western Allies came ashore in Scotland. PM Churchill and President Roosevelt gave great speeches to the UK and USA peoples, respectively. Churchill said something in his speech about this isn't the end or even the beginning of end but the end of the beginning. The UK people in the occupied territories were so inspired that's there rumors of more partisan activities there.

The Russians took Kursk and recaptured Smolensk destroying but units occupying those cities.

2/12/43

Axis

Hitler has been replaying film of Churchill's speech, and muttering something about Goring and the Luftwaffe under his breath.

This turn, the Germans moved back a bit in Russia, and that's about all they did.

In the west, the partisan in the UK was eliminated, along with about half of an Italian fighter wing :(

One of my transports moving to the UK ran into an American sub. The sub was bombed by a fighter wing, and then attacked by a DD. It only lost three steps, so I don't think you will lose any sleep over that.

End of the beginning is right!

Allies

Nothing to report on the Russian front except for some troop movements.

In the west, the Allies placed several of their fleet units in harms way attacking the German two transports (only one sub attacked the one in port) and DD fleet unit. Also, a few air attacks and BB bombardments were made against two German infantry corps in Scotland.

3/4/43

Axis

No combat in the east. In the west, German naval bombers destroyed a British BB in the Channel, and one of the American subs in the Channel was bashed around a bit.

The German defenders in the UK are on their own now---I can see that reinforcing them will now be impossible. I would not want to add much more to the defense anyway, because as the perimeter shrinks, retreating units back to France would be also impossible. The units that are there now will either win, or they will die there. Winning is not likely...

Allies

Two sub fleet units attacked and destroyed the German DD. In England there were a couple of bombing attacks against Liverpool to bring out and engage the German/Italian fighters. The battle was pretty much a draw. In Russia I tried two attacks against a German infantry corps. The Russians got the worst.

3/24/43

Axis

Well, so much for the German Navy!
Tactical air tried bombing the subs in the Channel, but the results were under-whelming. In Berlin, there have been vocal demonstrations demanding the Manstein, the hero of the Battle of Tula, be brought back to Germany from his posting in the UK. The rumor is that OKH (and Hitler) agree with this assessment, and in fact the demonstration itself may not have been as spontaneous as it seemed---public demonstrations aren't highly recommended in the Third Reich
:)

The whole affair may be a face-saving way of removing Manstein from England, without actually conceding that the German position in the UK is deteriorating. A further rumor has it that Leeb may be the lucky general who gets to oversee things in the UK. Although no move has been made yet, it is probably imminent. Meanwhile, the Propaganda Ministry in Berlin announced today that three Russian corps were destroyed, and a fourth virtually so in a surprise mini-offensive. Fighting occurred north east of Kiev and also near Lake Ladoga, south east of Novgorod. Ukrainian partisans confirmed the substance of these reports, so it would appear that the Wehrmacht still has a very strong offensive capability, when it chooses to employ it.

Something you may not have yet experienced with this mod Ronnie is that when the German tech gets to be roughly double of that of the Russians, counter-attacks by the Germans can be very nasty. Most of my infantry is level 9 now, compared to 5-6 for the Russians, so that is not bad. But, when a target is low in efficiency, already damaged, and is subjected to an air attack first, its elimination is assured.

German armor is 12-13 now, which is very scary. In my past games with Borger, such an armor unit can destroy a corps by itself, without air, in many circumstances. With air, it's a slam-dunk. Happily for you, I must keep some armor in reserve in the west---plus, tanks don't run on water. Right now I am hanging in there for oil, but when the Russian oil fields are re-captured by you, the writing is on the wall for me :)

I think the next several turns will tell us a lot about game balance in this mod. Hopefully, the Germans can continue to threaten in very narrow frontages, but I also hope that the initiative will gradually swing over to the Russians. Presumably with the manpower problems I have, and the lack of same for you, this is what will happen.

In the west, the initiative has definitely switched to the Allies. I am now forced to keep a reserve ready for Overlord, and continued air support of the forces in the UK is not really viable much longer.

This has been a very unusual game, but I am sure enjoying it. I hope that you are too.

Allies

This has been an extremely enjoyable game for me too. I don't know if I'm holding my own, about to lose at any moment or winning.

In Russia, the Russians captured a couple of cities, eliminated a couple of garrisons and a Romania corps and depleted a couple more units.

Unless you counterattack they're on the verge of recapturing Stalingrad.

In the West, the Allied airpower eliminated the badly depleted infantry corps. Allied BB made a couple of bombardments. Not much else to report. We also had some fighter to fighter engagements.

4/13/43

Axis

Only one thing to report: a German fighter unit attacked your depleted fighter in Northern Ireland, and depleted it further. Otherwise, all quiet, everywhere.

Allies

Western Allied intelligence has learned that Manstein was recalled to France/German and has been replaced by Leeb. There was some communications pick up earlier that tip intelligence off to this but it has been confirmed. Allied sea and air power destroyed a German infantry corps Glasgow. A few fighter to fighter air battles took place. There was no clear winner there.

On the Russian front the Russian retook Stalingrad and inflicted some losses on other units.

5/3/43

Axis

Allies

The UK/USA destroyed another German infantry corps in Scotland (next to Edinburgh). In Russia, the Russian took Rostov and reduced the garrison in Krasnodar to 1-step. They also attacked a German and Italian infantry corps on your front line. No other action to report.

5/23/43

Axis

That's a very effective strategy in Scotland. You force me to commit more fighters, and even then I am not sure that will delay things all that much.

The Luftwaffe attacked Patton's HQ, but failed to get him, although his corps lost two steps.

Things are starting to look better for you in Russia too. All I could do this turn was destroy one Russian corps near Kiev.

Allies

The UK/USA had to reset and repair a number of units in the West so no action there. On the Russian front, the Russians recaptured Krasnadar and retook the Maikop oil fields. They also launched several attacks along the entire front destroying an Italian motorized corps, a German infantry corps and depleting two German infantry corps.

6/12/43**Axis**

The only action this turn was an air attack on your motorized corps just north of Edinburgh.

The Axis line in the east has withdrawn to take advantage of the Dnieper River.

Allies

The western Allies destroyed another infantry corps in Scotland using air. They took Edinburgh back. The Russians continued their push obvious to their own losses. They recaptured Astrakhan and the remaining oil field. They also destroyed a German motorized corps in the north and inflicted damage to other corps. They did take losses though.

7/2/43**Axis**

The Axis in the UK has pulled back a bit more. There is a rumor circulating among front-line Axis troops that soon a new "wonder weapon" will force the Allies to halt their offensive in the UK. Unfamiliar engine noises have been heard at night from some of the Luftwaffe airfields behind the front line. Could the new weapon be a new type of aircraft? :)

In the east, the Axis struck back, and destroyed or depleted a few Russian units. It would appear that the Russians have not yet discovered how to handle German armor.

Allies

The German tanks may be scary but what Stalin does to Russian infantry men who refuse to fight is even worse. The Russians kept pressing their attacks again without consideration of their own losses. The Russian airforce, though far insuperior to the German one, got into the fight.

One or two of infantry corps were destroyed and two were badly depleted.

In the west, the UK/USA continued their air and naval attacks and destroyed another infantry corps. Carrier based planes even attacked Leeb's corps and inflicted a step loss on it. The Allies have heard rumors of Hilter's secret weapons. The USA is working on one itself. Some program codename the Manhattan Project.

7/22/43**Axis**

The Germans took some time off to reinforce and upgrade some units.

No action anywhere.

Allies

The US/UK destroyed the motorized corps in Leeds. Rumor has it that

Leeb was injured in the attack and was flown back to Germany. US ground forces participated in this attack and have exposed themselves to counterattack. Will this be the USA's Kasserine pass? Also, the Liverpool was captured without a fight.

On the Russian front, the Russians kept pushing. They destroyed the 1-step motorized corps with air. They launched several attacks all along the front without regard (again) of losses. They even attacked the strong German tank corps from across the river knocking it down 2-steps and losing 14 total in the process. Also, Batum in the south was captured. Soon, all of the south will be back in Russian hands.

8/11/43

Axis

I guess in a small way it was the Kasserine Pass experience---the armor was destroyed, one motorized corps lost three steps and another lost two steps. For the US economy, this is nothing, but hopefully it slows you down a tiny bit.

The German tactical air is now strong enough to be qualified as fighter-bombers; they lose only a little bit when intercepted, and then still deliver a powerful punch against their ground targets. Still, it is now only a matter of time before the UK will once again see the Union Jack fluttering over Buckingham Palace, thanks to the strong American support.

In Russia, two Russian corps were eliminated, a couple more were weakened, but that is about all. I am content to hold the line I have until it simply becomes unviable. Right now, I can still replace losses (although with some fairly crappy quality).

Allies

The US/UK destroyed two more infantry corps. We've been in a fierce air battle for two years of the British Isle. This puts the Battle of Britain to shame. The Russians continued their attacks but they were more limited. They inflicted some damage but didn't destroy any units.

8/31/43

Axis

Not much left for you to do to liberate the UK. Good going, you may be able to get into Overlord on schedule yet. Although without a front in the Mediterranean, it might be a bit harder.

In the east, all I did was rebuild damaged units and upgrade some units. And the Romanian DD bombarded a Russian infantry corps on the coast, for one step loss.

Allies

The USA/UK captured London. PM Churchill and President Roosevelt gave stirring speeches but also cautioned the British and American people that there is still a long way to go in this war. Churchill thanked the valiant effort of the RAF would in the early days after Sea Lion stood alone against the Nazi war machine.

Little action is Russian. All the Allies are in need of significant repairs and rest.

9/20/43

Axis

Allies

Everyone is still taking a breather except for one attack up north in Russia. The British government and the Royal Family have return to reestablish their residency in London.

10/10/43

Axis

No action in the west.
In the east, a Russian corps near Novgorod was destroyed, as was another south of Krivoy Rog.

Allies

Not much to report. A couple of attacks in Russia. The US/UK are repairing and training new pilots. The Allies are taking a breather. I don't like giving the Axis one too but it really can't be helped.

10/31/43

Axis

I appreciate the rest, although there's not much I can do about my crappy replacements (other than keep them in the rear, and hope that quality goes back up. That's wishful thinking).

Allies

More upgrades, rest and repairs. I don't like giving you this much time off but hopefully it'll pay off. No attacks anywhere.

11/19/43

Axis

The only action was a naval and air attack on a Russian corps on the far southern end of the line.

I think you're looking good in this game. Ordinarily the Russians are the key to victory in CEAW, but I think this time, the balance will be tipped by the western Allies. Once you start pressuring me in the west again, I don't see how I can maintain such a long eastern front.

Allies

The Allies (US/UK) launched Operation Sky Hawk, which is designed to destroy Axis airpower and gain air superiority over France and the English Channel. This turn seemed like a good start. Two of your fighter wings were heavily damaged. Also, several cities in France and Germany were reduced.

Stalin has decided to take a break and let the western Allies carry the war to the Axis for a while. However, he won't stay silent forever; especially when there's land up for grabs.

12/9/43

Axis

Those two fighter wings were flattened! What hit them; tactical air or strategic?

The only action from the Axis this turn was when a Russian convoy bumped into a u-boat. The convoy lost 7 pp.

Allies

My strategy for going after your fighters is to attack a target near by with a strategic bomber. Allow my fighter to intercept. Then attack the fighter base with a second fighter. Obviously I need two fighter wings within range of your fighter and the near by target. Only one of your fighters were within range of two my fighters this turn. It got depleted to 3-steps (counter interception of it intercepting my strategic bomber and a follow up fighter attack against its base). Two other fighters were countered intercepted when they intercepted my strategic bombers. I didn't have any fighters in range to follow up with an attack on their bases. Those two fighters were reduced to 6-steps and 5-steps.

Also, the western Allies destroyed the garrison at Cherbourg and launched Overlord.

At sea two of your u-boats fleets each were engaged by a DD fleet. The first one, which was hidden, was bumped into a DD headed to engage the one that was visible. That one was reduced to 3-steps. The visible one was engaged by a second DD and reduced to 4-steps.

On the Russian front the Russians continue to take it easy. Rumor has it that Stalin is getting impatience but his Generals have convinced him to wait and let the Russian army rest and train.

12/29/43

Axis

Well executed! I did not expect D-Day quite this early.

The lines in Russia have been pulled back, to allow for re-deployment of some forces to the west.

I bombed one of your transports down to 4 steps, but that was all I could do.

Allies

The western allies got 4 corps ashore without any ground losses. Allied air and sea power saw to that. Your German armor does scare me though. There are also 4 corps linee up to land next turn.

In Russia, the Russians pushed all across their front. Stalin wasn't about to be outdone by the Allied landings in Normandy and Operation Overlord.

Thanks for the compliment on pulling of the initial invasion so fast. I wasn't planning on it but last turn your garrison in Cherbourg was destroyed rather easily and I didn't see a lot of Axis troops in France. I also had five corps adjacent to ports and decided to go ahead. I was worried about what you'd rail to the three Normandy hexes. The one plus for me was that I knew they would have no entrenchment.

1/19/44

Axis

In Russia, I destroyed two Soviet corps. Anything more than that would be too risky now. Luckily I did not get too carried away with my attacks, because now it's winter!

Allies

The Russians took this turn off. The western Allies captured Paris and continued landing more troops. They also bombed Germany reducing a couple of cities significantly. The Allied land units plan to stay within the protective umbrella of the Allied air; especially given that German armor has appeared on the French/German border.

2/7/44

Axis

The way things are going in the west, the Russians can take the rest of the war off!

No action this turn, just strategic withdrawals in the east, and building up in the west.

Allies

The western Allies continued bombing and got the Axis fighters to engage. In terms of air to air step losses it was pretty much an even trade, which I'll accept. Also, allied bombing destroyed Leeb's motorized corps and he's gone for 13 turns. German armor still scares me.

Not to be outdone Stalin ordered a limited Russian winter offensive. They destroyed two (or three) infantry corps and reduced a couple of others.

2/27/44

Axis

The Luftwaffe focused its attention on one US motorized corps near Paris, and reduced it to three steps. I took a fair amount of losses---I chose not to deplete my fighter force, so the bombers flew unescorted. Now the fresh fighters are waiting for YOUR bombers :))

In the east, retreat was the order of the day :(

Allies

The western Allies went after the German armor w/Leader in Essen. In the process a number of air battles took place and the armor corps was reduced to 5-steps. Total air step losses were about equal. Also, the western Allies captured Lille. PM Churchill and President Roosevelt justified the high Allied air losses as the cost for breaking the German military and bankrupting the German economy.

The Russians widened their winter offensive and destroyed two corps and two garrisons and depleted a few other units. The Russian airforce got into action; however, their fighters are severely outclassed by their German counterparts.

Allied intelligence puts the Axis air strength as follows:

Western Front

German Fighters: 5 (4-steps, 5, 7, 9 & 10)

German Tactical Bombers: 4 (8-steps, 3, 5 & 6)

Eastern Front

German Fighters: 3 (7-steps, 5-steps & 8-steps)

Italian Fighters: 1 (7-steps)

Italian Tactical Bomber: 1 (8-steps)

3/19/44

Axis

Churchill and Roosevelt are right--this is in fact the right way to break the back of the German war machine.

Nothing in Russia, except more retreats.

In the west, I justified your concerns about German armor. After a fanatical effort by unescorted tactical air units, a panzer corps advanced and demolished a British corps. Infantry units advanced with it, to prevent flanking attacks. Desperation is the order of the day...

Allies

The Western Allies launched an offensive aimed at the German tank and infantry corps in Belgium. The infantry corps was destroyed and the tank corps was reduced to 3-steps. A number of air battles occurred and again the step losses for both sides were about equal.

The Russians continued their winter offensive ignoring losses. They captured Pskov, Minsk and Odessa.

Allied intelligence has indications that the German production, manpower and oil reserves are low. Whether or not any are at the breaking point is not known by the Allies.

4/7/44

Axis

Your assessments are not far off. Oil and manpower are both in serious condition.

It continues to be in my best interest to retreat in Russia. A shorter line is a big plus---and having Yugoslavia neutral is helpful too. Maybe you should declare war on them ;-)

No action in the west either, other than retreating back behind the fortified line.

Allies

The Western Allies captured Brussels and Antwerp. There were the usual air battles with some of your fighters. I think the edge went to the Allies with the Axis suffering slightly higher losses. The Western Allies are proceeding cautiously ever mindful of an Axis trap (i.e., Battle of the Bulge).

In Russia, the Red Army pushed forward meeting little resistance. There were a couple of attacks and a bad low odds attacks in the South. Unlike the Western Allies, the Russians are proceeding as fast as they can. Winter is slowing them down.

4/27/44

Axis

Retreats continue in the east, although near the Black Sea, a depleted Russian corps was destroyed by a couple of Axis corps.

In the west, German bombers attacked a British corps, but did not do as much damage as hoped for. The escorting Italian fighters were mauled badly.

Things are going to get really bad soon, when winter ends and the Russians can advance freely again. If I did not have to contend with the western front, I am fairly sure the Russian advance could be stopped, but now I can't afford the oil, manpower, losses---nothing, really.

Interesting how quickly it can all change, isn't it?

Allies

The Western Allies captured Lyons and The Hague. They also went after and destroyed the two depleted Italian fighters. They also conducted air raids against two German tactical bomber bases inflicting some damage but suffering more step losses.

The Russian winter offensive continues and was met with little resistance from the Axis. They captured Brest-Litovsk, Lvov, Riga and Tallinn. They also conducted an air raid against a depleted Romania infantry corps and destroyed it but got the worst for it from an intercepting fighter.

5/17/44

Axis

Not as much movement in the Axis lines this time; I need to try entrenching and defending again in the east. There were single air strikes in the west and east, both had only modest gains.

Allies

The Russians pushed forward and met little to no resistance. A Russian strategic bomber did attack the airbase of a German fighter (after it engaged a western Allies fighter as depleted significantly). The Russians are back to a point that they were at over 3 years ago. This has been a hard fought campaign.

The western Allies took this turn to upgrade some of their land units but continued the attacks against German land and air units from the air. A German infantry corps was destroyed and a second one along with a garrison were depleted slightly. In terms of the overall air battle the western Allies came out ahead. Of course, the strategy here is to force the Axis to burn oil and PPs and manpower on repairs.

6/6/44

Axis

Not as much movement in the Axis lines this time; I need to try entrenching and defending again in the east. There were single air strikes in the west and east, both had only modest gains.

Allies

This is the historical date of D-Day!

The western Allies launched an offensive through the Low Countries destroying three infantry corps there. Through massive airpower they also destroyed Guderian's tank corps and put him out of action for some time (I didn't catch how long). US/UK strategic bombers also continued their campaign against two German cities in hopes of drawing out German fighters. They met no resistance from fighters and were very effective in their bombing.

Except in the south (Romania) the Russians stood down this turn to rest, repair and upgrade most of their units in preparation for a summer offensive in Poland. Stalin feels that he is now on the verge of getting "paid off" for saving Britain and 3 1/2 years of war with German.

6/26/44

Axis

Things are looking grim for the Axis in the west. My choice this turn was to try and hold the line. To that end, some air units were pushed into combat, without escort, followed by a strong panzer corps which destroyed the northern-most American armor. I expect the panzer corps will pay the price, but it's what I have to do now, I think.

Nothing in the east, other than some readjustment of the line.

Allies

I knew the US armor corps was exposed and I hate it's loss but I knew that if you engaged it you'd likely expose Rommel's armor corps (which you did). The western Allies did destroy it along with an Italian infantry corps. They also made contact with the German fortifications on the German border but didn't engage the units there.

The Russians brought their air and armor into the battle and destroyed an Italian corps and reduced a German infantry corps to 1-step. In the south they destroyed the German motorized corps and reduced a couple of other infantry corps. Unlike the western Allies the Russians keep pushing without much consideration to their own losses.

7/16/44

Axis

No action, other than repositioning some units.

Isn't it nice to have the disposable Russian units?

Allies

A lot happened this turn. On the western front, the Allies captured the German port of Wilhelmshaven. They accomplished this by first destroying the two German infantry corps and one Italian infantry corps defending the northern part of the German line there. US/UK fighters destroyed the remnants of three German tactical bomber wings. An Allied BB fleet ran into a German u-boat fleet based at Wilhelmshaven (after it's captured). A second BB fleet attacked it (in accordance to our house rules) and finished it off. In France, Allied forces captured Bordeaux and the port of La Rochelle.

On the eastern front the Russians captured Warsaw and the Romania oil fields at Ploesti. The Axis forces in Romania and Bulgaria are now cut off from by land from Germany and Italy. The Russians also destroyed and depleted a few other ground units.

Yes it's nice having disposable Russian units. Maybe you do but I don't think you know how close you came to defeating Russia. We can cover this in our post game analysis but at one point it was very bleak from my perspective. The failed "invasion" of Scotland which was launched on 12/19/41 and which you "eradicated" on 3/29/42 was a desperate attempt to take pressure off the Russians in hopes of saving them. At that point I thought I had lost. All I was trying to do was to keep Russia in the game.

8/5/41

Axis

That's the beauty of the "fog of war" in a game like this. One never knows for sure how close or far they are from victory (or defeat).

At the time when you were thinking things were bleak, I felt over-extended, and was worried (justifiably) that I needed more defenders in the west.

However, in retrospect, I probably had time to attack Moscow, really knock the Russians down, and then worry about the west.

Your invasion of Scotland, weak as it was, still had the desired psychological effect---it made me start worrying more about the west.

Well, you just made the Siegfried Line obsolete! Things are not looking good for the old Third Reich, I have to say...

I will be happy if I can make it to 1945, but I've got my doubts.

The only combat was a bit of action around Bucharest, which might slow you down for half a turn.

Allies

In the west the Allies destroyed all but the most southern Siegfried Line hexes. They also destroyed the German tank corps and garrison in the North and conducted air attacks against several bomber bases. It was a relief to get past the Siegfried line.

On the eastern front the Russians pressed attacks Budapest and Bucharest. They also attack a couple of infantry corps in Poland. Nothing else to report.

8/25/44

Axis

The German defense is a bit of a shambles now; I don't think it will take much for you to achieve some big breakthroughs in the next turn or two.

I made a couple of half-hearted counter-attacks but they accomplished next to nothing.

But a German partisan showed up in the east; all I need is a few hundred more.

Allies

In the west the Allies (UK) upgraded several of their ground units. Allied air did continue to pound German positions; especially air bases. One German infantry corps east of the Weser (I think that's the river) was almost destroyed by allied sea power (BB & carrier based air). The depleted corps was finished off by a British infantry corps which established a bridgehead across the Weser.

The UK fighter wing based in Malta was flying reconnaissance over the Italian port of Naples and was engaged by German fighters based in one of the Gustav hexes. The German fighters got the worse of it by losing a couple of steps and with the UK fighters taking no losses.

In the east the Russians continue to push. They captured Budapest and Hungary surrendered. They also reduced the infantry corps in Bucharest to 2-steps. They captured the German city of Vienna and engaged German units all along the German/Polish border. Stalin is also eyeing Italy to the south. Both Churchill and Roosevelt are stating in no uncertain terms that the Russians are to stay out of Italy. While Stalin is agreeing to this publicly his standing orders to the Red Army is to seize anything and everything that's within their reach without consideration to losses (theirs or their enemies).

9/14/44

Axis

The German tanks are now an amazing tech 19! Too bad they don't have any oil.

Hitler is examining his options (poison, or shooting himself---maybe both).

Apparently the SS have found some gasoline, so he can have the Viking funeral he always dreamt of.

It won't be long now, I am sure, before the Russians enter Berlin.

Allies

Barring any unforeseen Axis offensive the USA/UK and USSR forces should link up in next turn or the one after. Bucharest fell and Romania surrendered. Bulgaria won't be too far behind. Prague also fell to the Russians. Stalin is like a kid in a candy store. The Red Army is running unopposed in southern Germany.

In west (which isn't too far from the east now), US/UK forces broke through on a narrow front in the northern Germany and captured Hamburg.

10/4/44

Axis

Not much to do now, except retreat as best I can. The only way I can move tanks and aircraft now is if I throw them onto a train :-)

Hitler is dead, and Himmler is busy negotiating with the Swedes, trying to broker a deal with the Allies, at the expense of the USSR. Meanwhile, Goering is screaming in frustration because his ME262's are grounded by a lack of fuel.

Allies

This turn the Allies captured Copenhagen (liberating Denmark), Hanover, Munich and Nuremberg. There was discussion among the "Big Three" (Roosevelt, Churchill & Stalin) about holding some post-war trials at Nuremberg. The Russians pushed forward ignoring their losses. Their standing orders are to grab as much territory as possible and to destroy Axis units (in that order). The Allies destroyed the remaining Axis airpower in Germany. US/UK and Russians forces are on the verge of linking up.

The allies have also taken a more active interest in the Med and Italy proper.

10/24/44

Axis

A few desperate counter-attacks were made, as I had the units to spare. The odds were not in my favor, nor the results, but the damage to the Russian units might slow you down a tiny bit.

Of course, there is also the crushing weight of the western Allies to contend with...

Allied

The US/UK and Russians forces linked up outside the town of Leipzig, which was captured by the western Allies. The remaining German forces are in a pocket around Berlin. The only two German cities still under German control are Berlin and Stettin.

Sofia fell and Bulgaria surrendered to the Russian without a fight. The Russians destroyed the Italian corps holding out in Odessa and thus finished off the remnants of the Axis in the east (except for Finnish forces and Finland).

In the Med, British forces invaded Sardinia and captured the port of Cagliari. Also, they destroyed an Italian submarine operating in waters just off that island.

11/13/44

Axis

Germans did a few counter-attacks, to further slow things down (I hope).

Allies

The big news this turn was that the Allies captured Stettin (one of the last two remaining German controlled cities in Germany) and destroyed several infantry corps,

two of which were adjacent to Berlin. The Allies didn't occupy those hexes because they did want to be subject to counterattack from your two very powerful tank corps. So you'll be able to deploy/move units there.

In southern France and south German the Allies kept pushing toward Italy. Once Berlin falls and Germany surrenders the full might of the Allied airpower will turn on Italy. A little of that power is starting to shift there now.

12/3/44

Axis

You don't need to worry about counter-attacks when the German tanks are out of oil. They can't even attack, much less move. They are only good as defenders now.

Allies

Next turn will be the last one for Germany. The Allies cleared all units from around Berlin and reduced the tank corps there to 7-steps. Berlin is completely surrounded. US, UK and Russian forces have entered the suburbs of Berlin and are ready to make their final push.

US/UK forces captured the French port of Marseilles and this army group pushing towards Rome from the northeast. In the northwest US/UK forces have intermingled with Red Army forces in their push to grab Italian territory and capture Rome. There have been no flare ups between US/UK forces and Russian forces but tensions are high as they fight over who gets the roads.

12/23/44

Axis

The Allies are in complete control now. I would be happy to concede (and could have a long time ago) but I was enjoying seeing how it would play out, and so if you are still enjoying the game too, we may as well keep going.

Allies

The war in Europe is over! Berlin fell, Germany was defeated and Italy and Finland surrendered (i.e., your concession).

The US/UK and Red armies were both racing towards Rome and would have been able to capture it in two or three turns. So the Italian surrender (i.e., your concession) especially after German's defeat is understandable. Also, the Red Army was massing around Finland and had 8 corps ready for a seaborne invasion with landings near Helsinki. It's also understandable that Finland would surrender.

3. Summary

I think this game has shown that the Allies aren't defeated even when pushed very hard in the early stages of the war. I guess Ronnie felt during most of 1942 that he could end up losing Sverdlovsk and thus the entire game. But the game mechanisms show that it's very hard for Germany to capitalize upon this. You have to spend many turns marching eastwards to conquer the territory Russia retreated from. That burns oil and you don't kill any defenders while they retreat. The front line extends by 50% or more and that makes it impossible to maintain a double defense line. More captured hexes means more partisans as well and they are now a big nuisance for the Axis. Worst of all is that

you move so far east so you drop to supply level 3. That means you can only repair 3 steps and you can not rail any units in the area. So you can't quickly respond to Russian counter attacks by plugging holes. You may be forced to retreat to consolidate the situation.

All this proves that it's very challenging for Germany to try to save the situation when pushing so hard into Russia. You HAVE TO build reserves in the west for upcoming invasions of France and Italy and you can not expect support from units in Russia because they can't be railed out when they're so far east.

I think these German problems are very historical and the real Germans suffered the same problems as I have now and as Jim had in your game. Being stronger unit by unit is not enough to succeed. Logistical problems will keep you from getting all the way to Sverdlovsk.

I think the game I play against Ronnie will be a true test if Germany have a chance at all to win (according to our house rules). Jim almost made it till the end of May 1945 and lost 5 months short. I think he could have won if he had been able to hold the Allies in the Siegfried line for those 5-6 critical turns. Losing the Siegfried line is a major blow for the Axis. I will not make this mistake against Ronnie.

I well balanced game is a game when both sides feel they have a chance to win against an equal opponent. I think you can only get to Sverdlovsk against a very inferior Allied player. You have to make many mistakes for that to happen. .e. g. like defending too far to the west in 1941 and counter attacking too much in 1942, thus losing most of your front line units.

My gut feeling keeps telling me the game is a bit biased in favour of the Allies so the fall of Berlin will be some time in 1944 or early 1945. This is mainly because the later convoys are so huge so the Allies can roam freely. The problem with being forced to intercept with your fighters as the Axis is the main reason they run out of oil too early. But I can't see how we easily can change this. If we reduce the convoy max size they we may fix the later problem, but you create a new problem in 1940-1941 for Britain. At this stage Britain need every PP they can get and they just barely survive.

So I think we need to make a discussion after all our current games have finished to assess how well balanced the game is in every stage of the war. I feel the game is now excellently balanced from 1939 till maybe 1943. I don't see any reason to change anything here. But the Allies gain more and more momentum from 1943 and it's so hard for the Axis to do anything about it. But I'm not sure how it's possible to slow the Allied momentum from this stage a bit without sacrificing anything in the earlier stages. Do you have any suggestions?

Maybe one thing that could be done was to give a bigger percentage than 50% back when you sell a lab. This means that Germany can sell their labs late in the war and build maybe 3-4 extra units because the resell price is much better.

Maybe Germany needs to build more garrisons later in the war and use them as speed bumps instead of building more corps units. Killing 2 garrisons need more effort from the Allies than killing 1 corps.