

EPIC ARMAGEDDON: THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR

Introduction

This project is an attempt to apply the Epic Armageddon rules to the fighting between the Russian and German armies during World War Two. Initially I will be looking at the Eastern Front campaign from about the battle of Kursk (mid-1943) onwards. This is the classic period that allows Russian and German players to use both sides iconic tanks that most wargamers have heard of, E.G. Tiger, Panther, T34 and Stalin II.

It is not intended that EA:GPW will be a "historical simulation" and it must be pointed out that some rule mechanisms have been used with no regard to their attendant fluff.

The notional scale of representation is one base of infantry or one vehicle or gun model equals a platoon or platoon sized equivalent. Generally speaking, a platoon is analogous to a 'unit' in game terms whilst a battalion is analogous to a 'formation'.

With my own collection I do not bother to put vehicles such as tanks on bases and use coin (1p, 2p and 10p) sized templates for infantry and heavy weapons.

Tournament Play

EA does not provide a formula for determining the points value of a unit, ergo tournament style play between balanced armies is not currently possible. Therefore every battle must be scenario based with objectives and victory conditions determined by said scenario.

New Special Abilities

It is necessary to add a small number of new special abilities to the game.

Spotter = this ability is required to call in any indirect fire that is integral to the formation that the spotter unit is a part of.

Observer = this ability allows a unit to call in any indirect fire integral or attached to it specifically or the formation it is itself a part of.

Bunker = Bunker is an optional ability, it is never compulsory! The unit is deployed as (or in) a model of a bunker which then has the following effects:

- The unit is attacked as if it were an Armoured Vehicle

- The unit has its speed reduced to "Immobile"

- The units armour becomes 4+ (this gains "reinforced" if the bunker is made of concrete)

- The unit gets the "Thick Rear Armour" special ability

- The units close combat factor becomes 4+

- The unit gains the "Fearless" special ability

NOTES

I have introduced the concept of AT7+. This is (for the moment at least) in reference to the heavy machine gun's ability to affect armoured targets. In effect what this means is that HMG platoons can only affect armoured targets if they use Sustained Fire thereby gaining a +1 to hit. I am aware this will be nullified if the target is in cover, but otherwise the HMG would have a drastically better anti-armour capability than it had in real life!

DOCUMENT 1 (Version 1.1): THE RUSSIAN TANK CORPS

Strategy Rating 4. Initiative 2+

The Russian army fielded 31 Tank Corps during the course of the war of which 12 were promoted to "Guards" status. Corps structure, particularly with regard to corps assets, changed as frequently as it did with infantry divisions and therefore a definitive "one size fits all" army list is impossible to produce. As a result what follows should be looked upon as a "typical" structure for a late war tank corps. Players are urged to do their own research and modify this list as appropriate.

Although it is acknowledged that some armoured formations were equipped with Allied supplied vehicles these were not, relatively speaking, in widespread use and so (mostly for aesthetic reasons) have been ignored.

A corps consisted of three Tank Brigades, one Motorised Rifle Brigade, one 120mm Mortar Regiment, one Light Assault Gun Regiment, one Assault Gun Regiment (which was sometimes replaced by a heavy tank regiment of Stalin II), a Guards Mortar Battalion and a Reconnaissance Battalion. Construction battalions, engineers and other ancillary support formations are not covered within the scope of the rules and accordingly have been ignored.

THE TANK BRIGADE

The brigade consisted of up to three Tank Battalions (each of which counts as a formation for activation purposes) and the following brigade assets, of which only the HQ should be considered compulsory:

1 x Brigade HQ tank

1 x Anti-Aircraft Heavy machine Gun Company consisting of up to 3 x AAHMG platoons transported in trucks

1 x Sub Machine Gun Infantry Battalion consisting of:

1 x Battalion HQ (optional) transported in a truck

1 x Anti-Tank Rifle Company consisting of up to 3 x ATR platoons transported in trucks

1 x 45mm Anti-Tank Gun platoon transported by a truck

9 x SMG Infantry platoons transported in trucks

Note: If the SMG battalion HQ is not taken then the ATR and ATG assets cannot be taken and all infantry must be assigned to the tank battalions as tank rider upgrades – it should go without saying that the infantry do not use trucks when tank riding!

TANK RIDERS

1. Use the tank they are on as a transport.
2. Can claim the -1 to hit cover modifier whilst mounted.
3. Can fire whilst mounted.
4. Can be targeted separately from the tank they are on.
5. Suffer the same fate as the tank they are on.
6. Do not prevent the tank they are on from firing.

Each tank battalion consisted of:

1 x Battalion HQ tank

6 x Tank Platoons (chosen from T70, T34/76, T34/85)

Note: In 1943 at least 3 platoons in each battalion must be T70 light tanks. In 1944 non-Guard tank corps are limited to only one T34/85 battalion per brigade.

UNIT STATISTICS

Note: A battalion HQ tank has the same stats as a normal tank but has the Leader, Inspiring and Spotter special abilities, whilst a brigade HQ tank has the Commander and Observer special abilities.

T70 Light Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	6+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
45mm Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+	-	

T34/76 Medium Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	5+	5+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
76.2mm Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	-	
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc	

Notes: Was exceptionally good at crossing terrain, gets the Walker special ability to reflect this.

T34/85 Medium Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	30cm	5+	5+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
85mm Gun	60cm	AP5+ / AT5+	-	
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc	

Notes: Was exceptionally good at crossing terrain, gets the Walker special ability to reflect this.

Stalin II Heavy Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	4+	5+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
122mm Gun	90cm	AP4+ / AT4+	-	
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc	
AAMG	30cm	AA6+		

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Fearless.

SU76 Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	6+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
76.2mm Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	Fixed Forward Arc	

SU85 Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
85mm Gun	60cm	AP5+ / AT5+	Fixed Forward Arc	

SU100 Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	5+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
100mm Gun	60cm	AP5+ / AT5+	Fixed Forward Arc	

JSU122 Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	4+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
122mm Gun	90cm	AP4+ / AT4+	Fixed Forward Arc	
AAMG	30cm	AA6+		

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Fearless.

JSU152 Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	4+	5+	4+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
152mm Gun	90cm	AP3+ / AT4+	MW. Fixed forward Arc	
AAMG	30cm	AA6+		

Notes: Reinforced Armour, Fearless.

Armoured Half Track

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	6+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
HMG	45cm	AP4+ / AT6+	-	

Notes: Transport, may carry one platoon. Infantry can fire whilst mounted.

Truck

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	20cm	None	6+	-
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
None	-	-	-	

Notes: Transport, may carry or tow one platoon. Can be removed from play after the platoon dismounts without placing a blast marker on the formation, but it cannot be used again afterwards! Empty trucks do not block enemy line of sight or fire.

Corps HQ

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	None	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	

Notes: Supreme Commander, Bunker.

Brigade HQ

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	None	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	

Notes: Observer, Bunker

Battalion HQ

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	

Notes: Leader, Spotter, Bunker

Observation Post

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	3+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	

Notes: Observer. Ignores the 5cm gap rule. The parent formation does not take a blast marker if the OP is destroyed.

Rifle Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	5+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
Rifles and LMGs	15cm	AP5+	-	

Sub Machine Gun Infantry Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	5+	4+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
SMGs and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-	

Reconnaissance Infantry Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	5+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
Rifles and LMGs	15cm	AP5+	-	

Notes: Scouts, Spotter. Can be transported in armoured half track or truck.

MMG Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	4+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
MMG	30cm	AP5+	-	

Anti-Tank Rifle Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	6+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
PTRD 14.5mm	15cm	AP6+ / AT6+	-	

OR

Bazooka 15cm MW6+ Only available in 1945

Notes: Sniper, but only when firing AP with the PTRD.

82mm Mortar Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	6+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
82mm Mortar	20cm	AP5+ / AT6+	Indirect Fire	

120mm Mortar Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	None	6+	6+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
120mm Mortar	30cm	1BP	Indirect Fire	

45mm ATG Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	15cm	6+	6+	6+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
45mm AT Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+	-	

76.2mm Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	6+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
76.2mm Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+ OR 1BP	-	

Katyusha MLRS Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	20cm	None	6+	-
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
132mm Rockets	60cm	3BP	Indirect Fire. Slow Firing. Disrupt.	

Anti-Aircraft Heavy Machine Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	6+	5+	3+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
14.5mm Gun	30cm	AP4+ / AT7+ / AA6+	Extra Attacks (+1) when firing AP	

Notes: Can be transported in a truck.

TACTICAL DOCTRINE: THE OFFENSIVE

The Russians practised two types of offensive doctrine during the war; the infantry offensive, for which the basic formation of manoeuvre was the reinforced rifle division; and the tank offensive, for which the basic formation of manoeuvre was the reinforced tank corps. The infantry offensive was usually conducted on a broad front. The pace of the attack was slow because the infantry moved on foot. As a result of this it was given limited objectives close behind the enemy lines. The tank offensive however was all about speed, breakthrough and exploitation. It took place on a narrow frontage with objectives often deep in the enemy rear area. Ideally mobile units would crash through a hole in the German line rent open by an infantry offensive, then race as fast as possible towards their objective. To minimise the complexity of the operation mobile forces usually went, quite literally, straight forward and showed no proclivity to guard their flanks and rear. Obviously this gave the Germans certain advantages when trying to stop such breakthroughs. The allotted frontage on which a Russian rifle division would attack was 3 to 5km. The allotted frontage for a tank corps was 3 to 4.8km.

TACTICAL DOCTRINE: THE DEFENSIVE

The Russians relied on the position defence, meaning that all non-mobile units would hold the frontline in a static manner while mobile units waited in the rear to counter-attack any German units that broke through. Defence was preferred in depth using mutually supporting strong points as centres of resistance. A typical position would utilise fortifications, wire and mines to aid the defenders and was constructed in such a way as to channel (and/or trap) an attacking force into an anti-tank killing ground. The emphasis on destroying enemy armour was a result of the German practise of leading attacks with mobile forces. The largest trap of this kind was the battle of Kursk. Defensive frontages were usually twice that of offensive ones.

SOURCES

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