

## **EPIC ARMAGEDDON: THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR**

In the interests of brevity I am going to assume that you have already read the project notes that preceded Document 1.

### **DOCUMENT 2 (Version 1.0): THE PANZER DIVISION**

Strategy Rating 5. Initiative 1+ if SS 2+ if not

The German army formed 38 panzer divisions during the course of the war. Of these, seven were SS and three were named rather than numbered, those being: Panzer Lehr, Gross Deutschland and Hermann Goring. Almost all of these divisions saw action at one time or another on the Eastern Front. A further 10 "divisions" were formed during 1945, however none of them were brought up to full divisional strength with most being, at best, regimental in size. For completeness they were Panzer Divisions Kurmark, Clausewitz, Donau, Schlesien, Thuringen, Westfalen, Kurland, Holstein, Munchenburg, Juterbog.

When it comes to trying to create a typical structure for a late war panzer division we are mired in difficulty. Not only is there the problem that, after the battle of Kursk, few divisions were ever brought up to full TO&E there is also the problem of standardisation of equipment. The Germans actually produced more iron ore and crude steel than the Russians throughout the course of the war (240 million tons compared to 71 million tons for ore and 159 million tons compared to 57 million tons for steel). But, they lacked the ruthless drive to standardise production that gave the Russians the edge in sheer numbers of AFVs. Because of this German TO&Es often just specify a calibre and number of weapons to be used rather specifying an actual piece of equipment. This explains why many secondary sources often differ when commenting on divisional structure.

A panzer division consisted of one Panzer Regiment, two Panzer-Grenadier Regiments, one Artillery Regiment, a Reconnaissance Battalion, an Anti-Tank Battalion, an Anti-Aircraft Battalion and, in SS divisions only, an Assault Gun Battalion (later re-designated as a brigade for misdirection purposes). Engineers and other ancillary support formations are not covered within the scope of the rules and accordingly have been ignored.

#### **THE PANZER REGIMENT**

The regiment consisted of one or two Panzer Battalions each composed of up to three Panzer Companies (you may choose whether to have the battalion or the company count as a formation for activation purposes) and the following regimental assets, of which only a single regimental HQ should be considered compulsory:

- 1 x PzIV Regimental HQ tank
- 1 x Panther Regimental HQ tank
- 1 x Sd7/2 Anti-Aircraft Platoon

Each Battalion consisted of:

- 1 x Battalion HQ tank
- 1 x Anti-Aircraft Platoon. Can be Sd7/1 or Wirbelwind or Möbelwagen
- 9 x Tank Platoons, either PzIV or Panther

The optional Company structure within a battalion consists of:

- 3 x Tank Companies each consisting of:
  - 1 x Company HQ tank
  - 3 x Tank Platoons, either PzIV or Panther





## UNIT STATISTICS

Note: All HQ tanks have the same stats as a normal tank however; a company HQ tank has the Leader and Spotter special abilities, a battalion HQ tank has the Leader, Spotter and Inspiring special abilities, whilst a regimental HQ tank has the Commander and Observer special abilities.

### PzIVH Medium Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	5+	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
75mm L48 Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	-
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: This tank had spaced armour plates and schutzen (side skirts), it counts as having reinforced armour against MW attacks. The tank may fire before or after moving.

### Panther Medium-Heavy Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	4+	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
75mm L70 Gun	90cm	AP4+ / AT3+	-
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Stabilised Chassis, does not get the -1 to hit penalty after taking a double action. Reinforced Armour, Fearless. May fire before or after moving.

### Tiger 1 Heavy Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	4+	4+	4+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
88mm Gun	90cm	AP4+ / AT3+	-
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Reinforced Armour, First Strike, Thick Rear Armour, Fearless. May fire before or after moving.

### King Tiger Heavy Tank Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	15cm	3+	4+	4+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
88mm L70 Gun	120cm	AP4+ / AT3+	-
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Reinforced Armour, First Strike, Thick Rear Armour, Fearless. May fire before or after moving.

### StuG IIIG Assault Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	5+	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
75mm L48 Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	Fixed Forward Arc
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: The StuG IIIG had a very small silhouette and was difficult to hit, to reflect this when the unit is not in cover all attacks against it are at -1 to hit.

### Marder III Tank Destroyer

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
75mm Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Sniper, but only when firing AT.

### Grille Self propelled 150mm Artillery Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	5+	4+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
150mm Gun	90cm	2BP	Indirect Fire, Disrupt, Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Can be called in by any unit in the regiment with the Spotter or Observer special ability.

### Sd7/1 Quad 20mm Anti-Aircraft Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	20cm	None	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Quad 20mm Gun 30cm		AP4+ / AT6+ / AA6+	-

Notes: The armoured cab variant gets 6+ Armour.

### Sd7/2 37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Light Vehicle	20cm	None	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
37mm Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+ / AA5+	-

Notes: The armoured cab variant gets a 6+ Armour.

### Wirbelwind Anti-Aircraft Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	5+	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
Quad 20mm Gun 30cm		AP4+ / AT6+ / AA6+	-

### Mobelwagen Anti-Aircraft Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	5+	5+	5+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
37mm Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+ / AA5+	-

### Sd251 Half Track

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Transport. Infantry can fire whilst mounted.

Variants: 251/1 A command version with radio antenna

251/2 Self propelled 81mm Mortar carrier: Range 20cm. AP5+ / AT6+. Indirect Fire.

251/16 Armed with flamethrower: Range 15cm. AP4+ / AT5+. Ignore Cover.

### Sd250 Half track

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	6+	6+

Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes
LMGs	30cm	AP5+	Fixed Forward Arc

Notes: Transport. Infantry can fire whilst mounted.

Variants: 250/7 Self propelled 81mm Mortar carrier: Range 20cm. AP5+ / AT6+. Indirect Fire.

250/8 Self propelled 75mm L24 Gun carrier: Range 20cm. AP5+ / AT6+. Indirect Fire.

250/9 Self propelled 20mm Anti-Aircraft Gun: Range 30cm. AP4+ / AT6+ / AA6+

### Sd234/1 Armoured Car

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	6+	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
20mm Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+	-

#### Sd234/2 Puma

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Armoured Vehicle	25cm	6+	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
50mm L60 Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	-

#### Divisional HQ

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	Immobile	None	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-

Notes: Supreme Commander, Bunker.

#### Regimental HQ

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	10cm	None	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-

Notes: Observer, Bunker

#### Battalion HQ

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	15cm	None	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Rifles and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-

Notes: Leader, Spotter, Bunker

#### Observation Post

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	Immobile	3+	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
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.

#### Panzer-grenadier Platoon

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	15cm	None	5+	5+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Rifles and LMGs	15cm	AP5+	-
Panzerfaust	15cm	AT6+	MW

#### Combat Engineer Platoon

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	15cm	None	4+	5+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
SMGs and LMGs	(15cm)	Small Arms	-
Flamethrower	15cm	AP4+ / AT5+	Ignores cover

#### 120mm Mortar Battery

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	10cm	None	6+	6+

<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>
120mm Mortar	30cm	1BP	Indirect Fire

Heavy Machine Gun Platoon

<u>Type</u>	<u>Speed</u>	<u>Armour</u>	<u>Close Combat</u>	<u>Firefight</u>
Infantry	10cm	6+	5+	3+
<u>Weapon</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Firepower</u>	<u>Notes</u>	
HMG	30cm	AP4+ / AT7+	Extra Attacks (+2) when firing AP	

20mm Anti-Aircraft Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	None	5+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
20mm Gun	30cm	AP4+ / AT6+ / AA6+	-	

105mm Howitzer Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	None	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
105mm Gun	60cm	1BP	Indirect Fire	

150mm Howitzer Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	None	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
150mm Gun	90cm	2BP	Indirect Fire, Disrupt	

Wespe Self Propelled 105mm Howitzer Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	6+	5+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
105mm Gun	60cm	1BP	Indirect Fire	

Hummel Self Propelled 150mm Howitzer Battery

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Armoured Vehicle	20cm	6+	6+	4+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
150mm Gun	90cm	2BP	Indirect Fire, Disrupt	

Pak 40 75mm Anti-Tank Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	10cm	6+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
75mm L48 AT Gun	45cm	AP5+ / AT5+	-	

88mm Anti-Aircraft Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	6+	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
88mm Gun	90cm	AP4+ / AT3+ / AA6+	-	

37mm Anti-Aircraft Gun Platoon

Type	Speed	Armour	Close Combat	Firefight
Infantry	Immobile	None	6+	6+
Weapon	Range	Firepower	Notes	
37mm Gun	30cm	AP5+ / AT6+ / AA5+	-	

Truck or any Sd Transport/Tow

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.

### TACTICAL DOCTRINE: THE OFFENSIVE

German offensive doctrine was similar to the Russian tank doctrine. However the Germans stressed the use of infantry and armour in close co-operation. The idea was that armoured formations acted as a sword while the infantry acted as a shield. Whenever possible, mobile units led the attack advancing on a narrow front so as to maximise their impact and firepower upon the enemy. The preferred formation to do this in was the "Panzerkeil" which placed the heaviest armour as the tip of a wedge, medium tanks would form on the flanks whilst panzer-grenadiers would form the base thereby being protected by the armour. Once engaged German forces would seek to bring about a fluid battle where their tactical mobility coupled with their superior communications gave them an advantage over the lumbering Russian forces. At the strategic level an attack by mobile forces would generally be an attempt to encircle the enemy, creating a pocket of troops that would be surrounded and then liquidated. At Kursk the Germans attacked the shoulders of the salient in an attempt to do just that.

The allotted frontage on which a German infantry division would attack was 4 to 5km. The allotted frontage for a panzer division was 1.8 to 3km.

### TACTICAL DOCTRINE: THE DEFENSIVE

The Germans preferred the mobile defence with less emphasis on fixed lines. This was because although defence in depth was the ideal, the vast distances the Germans had to hold meant that such a strategy was frequently just not possible. However, the mobile defence allowed greater flexibility in the absorption of an attack and allowed the Germans to play up their strengths of tactical mobility and communication. Where defence in depth was possible "belts" of defences were preferred often 6 to 8km deep. The advantage of this distance was that any Russians that did penetrate the belt would almost certainly have strayed out of range of their supporting artillery.

There were, primarily, two signals the Russians gave off before an attack that usually alerted the Germans and aided their defence. Firstly, Russian patrols in the area would increase by a noticeable level. Secondly, often days before the attack itself took place, the Russian artillery would move up to the frontline and begin to register their targets. This meant actually firing live rounds and observing the fall of shot. Russian artillery barrages that proceeded an attack were often relatively ineffective as the Germans would simply pull back prior to the barrage (having knowledge of where it was going to hit and a general idea of when), allow it to pass, then reoccupy their positions again afterwards. This was a vital advantage as the Russians could mass 200 to 300 guns per kilometre and had the capacity to deluge an 80km square area with the fire from 20,000 guns!

The allotted frontage for a division to defend was, under ideal circumstances, 3 to 6km. However, the Germans were often forced by circumstance to allot frontages of 12 to 18km.

### TACTICAL DOCTRINE: EINHEIT & KAMPFGRUPPE

A lot is made by secondary sources of German superior tactics and combat efficiency and with some justification. After all in 1944 for example 2.5 million Germans fought 6.1 million Russians on slightly less than even terms (accepting the fact that the Germans were fighting defensive battles, which is a force multiplier, and were steadily pushed back). So how did they do it? The answer, in a nutshell, was the principle of Einheit (translated as "Unity"). The German army was the first to realise (and arguably the best to exploit) the notion that the optimum integration of different weapon systems for maximum efficiency was key to victory on the battlefield. There was a saying at the time "Take care of the firefights and the battle will take care of itself".

By its very nature Einheit required an educated fighting force that routinely trained teeth and supporting arms together - which is exactly what the Germans had and did. Infantry, artillery and armour were given extensive training on how to cooperate together to overcome a foe. Einheit implied and required a decentralised approach to the allocation of fighting assets and this found its ultimate expression with the Kampfgruppe (translated as "battlegroup"). The idea being that mission specific combinations of units could be brought together under the appropriate level of HQ in order to better accomplish a task. By modern standards this does not seem very radical an idea but by the standards of WWII it was practically revolutionary. It should also be pointed out that as the war progressed the formation of Kampfgruppen became less something that the Germans chose to do and much more a case of having to put shattered remnants together into some sort of fighting formation.

## SOURCES

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