

**UNOFFICAL**

**OPERATION ‘WINTER THAW’**

**TEAM YANKEE (UNOFFICAL)**

**Operation ‘Winter Thaw’**

**unofficial narrative tournament (ver.1.3)**

**Background….**

It’s one of the worst winter’s on record that had brought combat operations on the continent to a standstill on both sides. Isolated patrol clashes happened sporadically through the winter but to no clear depth or breach found on either side to exploit nor able to, given the conditions.

What the adverse conditions did allow was a brief respite from what had been continuous combat operations. Allowing for reinforcing, rearming and critical maintenance to be carried out on battle worn and weary units for the most part. Some line units have not been able to withdraw to re-org.

Now the winter is thawing, the snow drifts that impeded operations are melting but heavy rains have begun creating further operations hazards, by flooding rivers and estuaries turning the farmland into quagmires and most roadways slippery mudslides. The tactical situation is far from ideal for either NATO, nor the Warsaw Pact to take the smallest advantage of.

Exasperated with the lack of progress, an influential group of the Politik have pressured the GRU to provide intelligence in which a course of action can break a deadlock and the regain the offensive. Under pressure the has GRU scrutinised even the most sceptical intelligence reports from the operational regions for a break before NATO begins operations, in which to appease the Politik and the offset the promises of ‘tours of duty’ in Siberia for any further delays.

A small gleam of intel from a dubious KGB sleeper source report noted a strained NATO deployment in a small regional sector, defence found lacking in depth and depleted battle-weary units holding the line. No factual evidence was available to support the report from that region. But the GRU drew up an operational plan ‘Konets gibernatsii’ (Hibernation’s end) to satisfy their Politik masters.

Drawing on available units in region, the plan was to breach the line creating a corridor and expanding the width of the breach north and south. However, readiness reports on these available units were found not to make good reading, casualty figures and equipment availability were worse than 50% below in most companies never mind at divisional strength. Nethertheless, there was enough available to force the breach with the current availability, providing reinforcements to get to the area in time……however, the weather does not show signs of improving yet….

NATO is battle weary; however, the winter has managed to allow for some additional reinforcements to arrive from US, Canada and the UK. National Guard and Territorial Army units have bolstered the present regular forces along with French, Danish, Dutch, Belgian and West German reserves have been activated and sent forward. The veteran units do their upmost bringing the reserves up to speed with training, but will it be enough?

NATO intelligence had predicted they would have another month before a spring Warsaw Pact offensive and have attempted to use that time to roll through fresh units to depleted unit areas allowing for those depleted to be withdraw as best possible for rest and refit, mainly carrying out the redeployments under the cover of darkness. Muffling engine noise or repositioning under the cover of artillery exchanges but mostly hidden thanks to the round the clock efforts of the combat engineers creating diversions. Operation ‘Winter Thaw’ was the codename for this challenge.

The change in the weather has now made this endeavour awkward to nigh impossible in most regions and they are out of time, what is in place will have to hold…until the weather starts to dry out…NATO chiefs knows time isn’t on their side……they have to hold and break any upcoming offensive on the newly (hastily) established defence in depth dispersed units.

Will the Warsaw Pact breakthrough or will NATO break them on the bulwarks?

The fate of the region is in your hands…

**Welcome to ‘Winter Thaw’.**

This is an unofficial tournament and one that attempts to challenge normal or standard practice for formation building for both NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

This narrative tournament will be held over one day with 3 mission games being played over one day. These missions have been pre-chosen and with some additional rules that are explained later in this pack.

The tournament will be held at the following venue on the May 2023;

**Firestorm Games, Cardiff**

**\***Please be aware that parking is tight at this venue, so if are available to car share please do.

**(Please be aware that there is a maximum number of 8 persons for this tournament 4 NATO and 4 WarPac/Soviet, this will be filled by paid entries to the tournament)**

The itinerary of the day shall be;

* 10:00 - 10:15 booking in
* 10:15 - 10:30 tournament briefings and first pairings
* 10:30 - 12:30 first game
* 12:30 - 13:00 Lunch and best painted army voting.
* 13:00 - 15:00 second game
* 15:00 - 15:30 Prep for 3rd Mission
* 15:30 - 17:30 Third game
* 17:30 – 18:30 Tournament debrief and awards
* 18:30 tournament close

**Entry Fee**

The entry fee to this event is £18.00. This covers the price of the table hire, lunch and prizes.

**Army List Selection**

This rules on army lists are to imitate the attrition of combat on both sizes and to make the choice of force challenging, as we have all heard of the ‘BMP horde’, the ‘Soviet Phalanx’, ‘Hind Swarm’, ‘Milan spam’ etc. These restrictions, for a better term, will challenge formation building and the way you tactically adapt to each scenario, no one formation will ideally suit all scenarios and their additional rules in this tournament and in doing so make the games swifter and more, hopefully, entertaining.

Further to this, **no advanced equipment** is to be taken. For example;

WarPac- NO T72MB

Soviet – NO T80, T72B, T64B, Tunguska, BMP3

NATO – NO Leopard 2A5, Challenger 1, Leclerc, M1A1, Marder 2, RDF, Marksman

NO Milan2, TOW2, Dragon2 etc.

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT A MINIMAL DISTANCE OF 1/2” IS MAINTAINED BETWEEN VEHICLES**

The army list for this tournament shall be x2 formation with divisional support with a maximum point value of 85pts, however 1 of your formations must be mechanised infantry or Recon. No allied formation. As previously mentioned, your formation selection is further subjected to limitation:

**Tank Units**

Warsaw Pact- 5 tanks maximum per company

NATO- 3 tanks maximum per platoon (Initially, this may seem no change. However, this does impact on French and US M60 formations)

**Mechanised/Motorised Units** (obviously infantry numbers are governed by the number of transport vehicles, hence why the maximum number vehicles sets the precedence on the infantry stands)

Warsaw Pact- 6 vehicles maximum per company

NATO- 3 vehicles maximum per platoon

**Heliborne Assault Units**

Afgansty- 18 stands maximum per company, maximum of x2 Hinds per company

US Airborne/USMC- 10 stands maximum per platoon, maximum of x3 Huey’s per platoon

UK Heliborne- 6 stands maximum per platoon/x4 Milan teams maximum for the Milan platoon, maximum of x2 Lynx’s per platoon

**Divisional Support units**

Helicopters (Hunter killer/non Afgansty) - maximum of 2 helicopters

Aircraft- maximum of 2 aircraft

Artillery- maximum of 4 SPGs

Mortars- maximum of 3 Mortar carriers

ATGW- no restrictions (other than mentioned in the UK heliborne)

Recce units- No restrictions

**Player must have as part of their army list a pre-selected 40% reserve list from their formations.**

**Off table Fire Support (Experimental rules)**

If players wish to (and both agree to!), they can place one of their division support artillery units into off table fire support with the following rules;

* Players must have the models present as part of their army list.
* The must be a divisional support unit and not from the formation,
* Only dedicated observer units and Formation Commanders can attempt to range in for off board fire support. Ranging in skill roll for off board will always be taken from the observer or Formation Commander skill rating, with an additional +1 to the ranging in roll. If these are destroyed, the battery cannot re-range in on other targets.
* Measuring for the off table is done from the table edge of player’s deployment zone.
* If placed in reserve, artillery will still have to be rolled for as per the normal rules but be deployed off table and will be classed as ‘moving’ that turn they arrive.
* Off table fire support can only be engaged by counter battery fire and airstrikes
* Counter Battery fire- The artillery unit will be classed as ‘in cover’ for the purpose of ranging in of Counter battery fire, the unit can only be targeted once it has fired.
* Airstrikes- airstrikes can attack off table fire support, however providing the player has an Anti-Aircraft SAM system (that they have purchased as part of their army) situated within 6” of their table edge they can provide air cover as part of the SAM ‘umbrella’ for the off table fire support. However, this will be taken at the extreme range of the radar guidance which will incur an additional +1 to the dice roll to hit the aircraft.
* If there is no SAM umbrella available, the artillery can use their AAMG (if equipped) to defend themselves as per normal rules.

**Missions**

For simplicity and ease of play, the missions from the Mission pack will be utilised for this tournament. However, there is (as described below) some additional rules in these scenarios in which to make them slightly more challenging and fitting to the background.

**1st mission**- **Scouts Out**, Missions pack.

Alterations to the mission;

The entire mission is a night fight.

Adverse weather (heavy rain) and ground conditions-

* Water logged terrain- vehicles must make a crossing check every change on terrain that is not roadway during movement. Crossing checks will fail on a roll of 1 or 2.
* Rain slick roads- maximum movement per turn on roadways 18” per turn
* Heavy rain= Helicopters- limited movement due to flying conditions, 18” per turn
* Heavy rain= Aircraft- limited movement to 36” per turn due to flying conditions
* Shooting- heavy rain affecting all shooting at long range, add an additional +1 to any shots over 16”
* Roll a dice each players turn for the weather to dissipate, going up a number each turn. Roll of a ‘1’ in the first turn, ‘1&2’ second turn etc. when the roll is achieved the rain stops.

**2nd mission**- **Vanguard**, Missions pack.

Alterations to the mission;

Adverse weather (fog) and ground conditions-

* Water logged terrain- vehicles must make a crossing check every change on terrain that is not roadway during movement, standard crossing check rules.
* maximum movement per turn on roadways 24” per turn
* Shooting- fog affecting shooting at long range for non-Thermal Imaging/Infra-Red units, add an additional +1 to any shots over 16”. Roll each turn for the dissipation of the fog, on a roll of a 1 the fog clears and normal rules for shooting will apply.
* Roll a dice each players turn for the weather to dissipate, going up a number each turn. Roll of a ‘1’ in the first turn, ‘1&2’ second turn etc. when the roll is achieved the fog clears.

**3rd mission**- **Free for all**, Missions pack.

Alterations to the mission;

Adverse ground conditions-

* Water logged terrain- vehicles must make a crossing check every change on terrain that is not roadway during movement, standard crossing check rule.

**End of game Points Awarding**

Points are to be awarded as per the chart in the rule book or Mission Pack

The vote for the Best painted army will be held during the lunchbreak with players writing down the player whose army they believe deserves the award.

**End of tournament awards**

Awards will be presented for the following categories;

* Tournament Team winners
* Tournament Tank Ace (highest scoring player)
* Best Painted army of the Tournament
* ‘Went down fighting!’