

Turn 31

Not much has happened this turn. Every squad I have has taken casualties and a Russian sniper has shown up in my artillery park and I think some cavalry is heading that way too.



Turn 32

Another bad turn for the Germans many of troops are routing and I doubt I can push hard enough by Bystrik to get the kills I need to push aside the Russians. The Russians in the town around turn 10 or so withered my troops down enough to hurt this offensive quite a bit and now the main problem is I am critically low on armour and dont have any tank busting weapons, 4 air strikes would be great right about now.... Still I think I can take the crossroads even if it means heavy losses and I am killing a lot of Russian infantry every turn.



Turn 33

Really at this point I think only the objective in the north I can contest since I have lost so many troops near Bystik. The picture shows it all.



Turn 34

Not much progress has been made and I doubt that I can convincingly threaten the objectives but looking at it I am pleased about what I have been able to do. I advanced more than a kilometre in 34 turns which is quite good going, and I think I can clinch one of the objectives. I think next game I will need more heavy tanks to break through Russian positions.



Turn 35

My positions near Bystrik are completely routed there is no chance there I can recover there, I simply don't have the armoured support I need there, next time I think every battle group I form will have some Tiger's to help form a spear head. At the top of the map my progress is very good. I think I can capture those victory locations in the 5 turns I have left, but lets never say never...





Turn 36

The game is definitely going down to the wire now. In the northern most part of the map, things are going better, but every else is a bust. The German units get closer and actually capture a hex flag in the extreme north, Soviet artillery lands on top of their own units and my tanks in an attempt to squash my attack. The 152mm rounds are deadly to the half-tracks but the tanks ignore the heavy rounds.



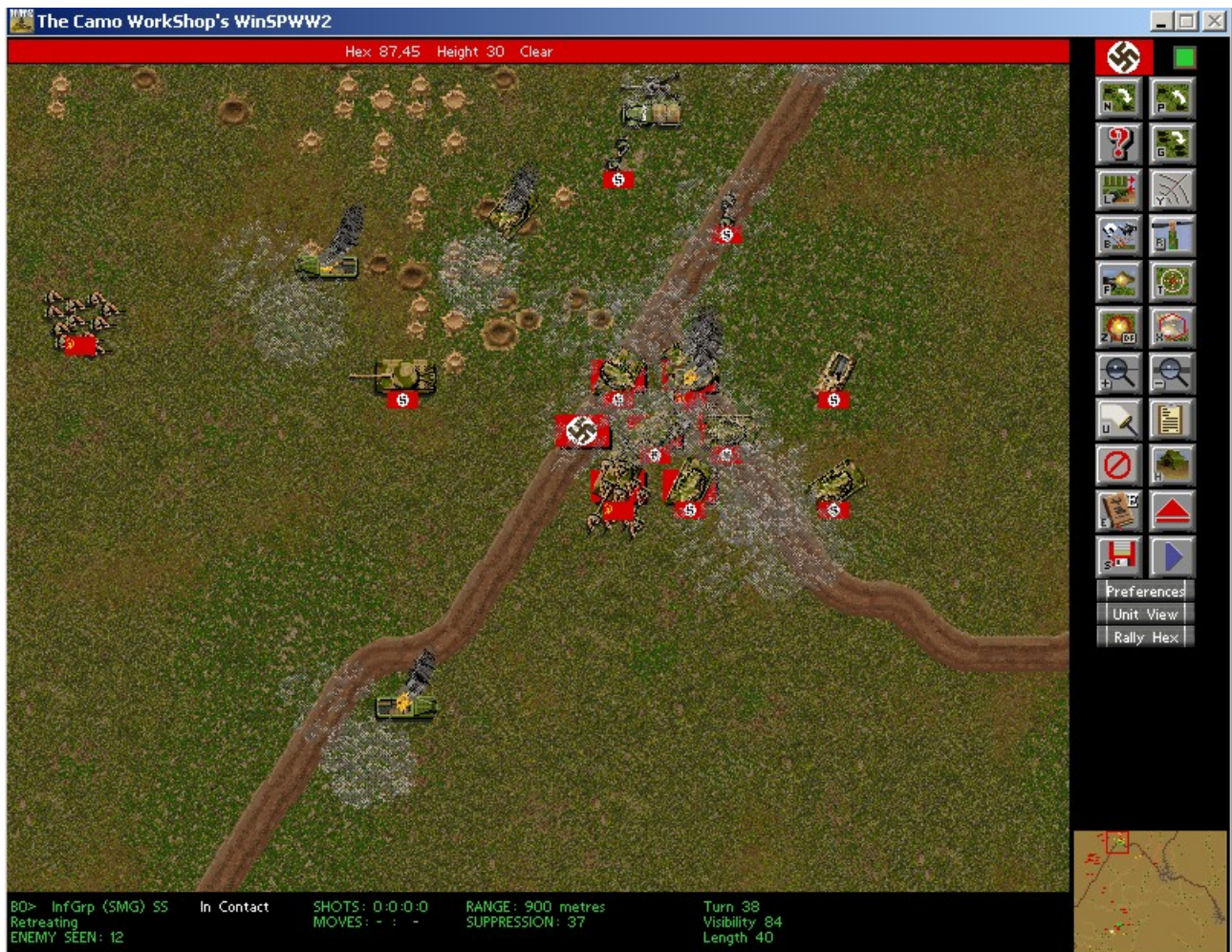
Turn 37

Again I try to keep the momentum up, the Russians attack near Bystrik in response my 88's kill two tanks. Nothing else much happens.



Turn 38

This turn some success in the extreme north when my tanks overrun the Russian positions near the crossroads. An SS squad near Bystrik destroys a KV tank. Other than that nothing else much happens.



Turn 39

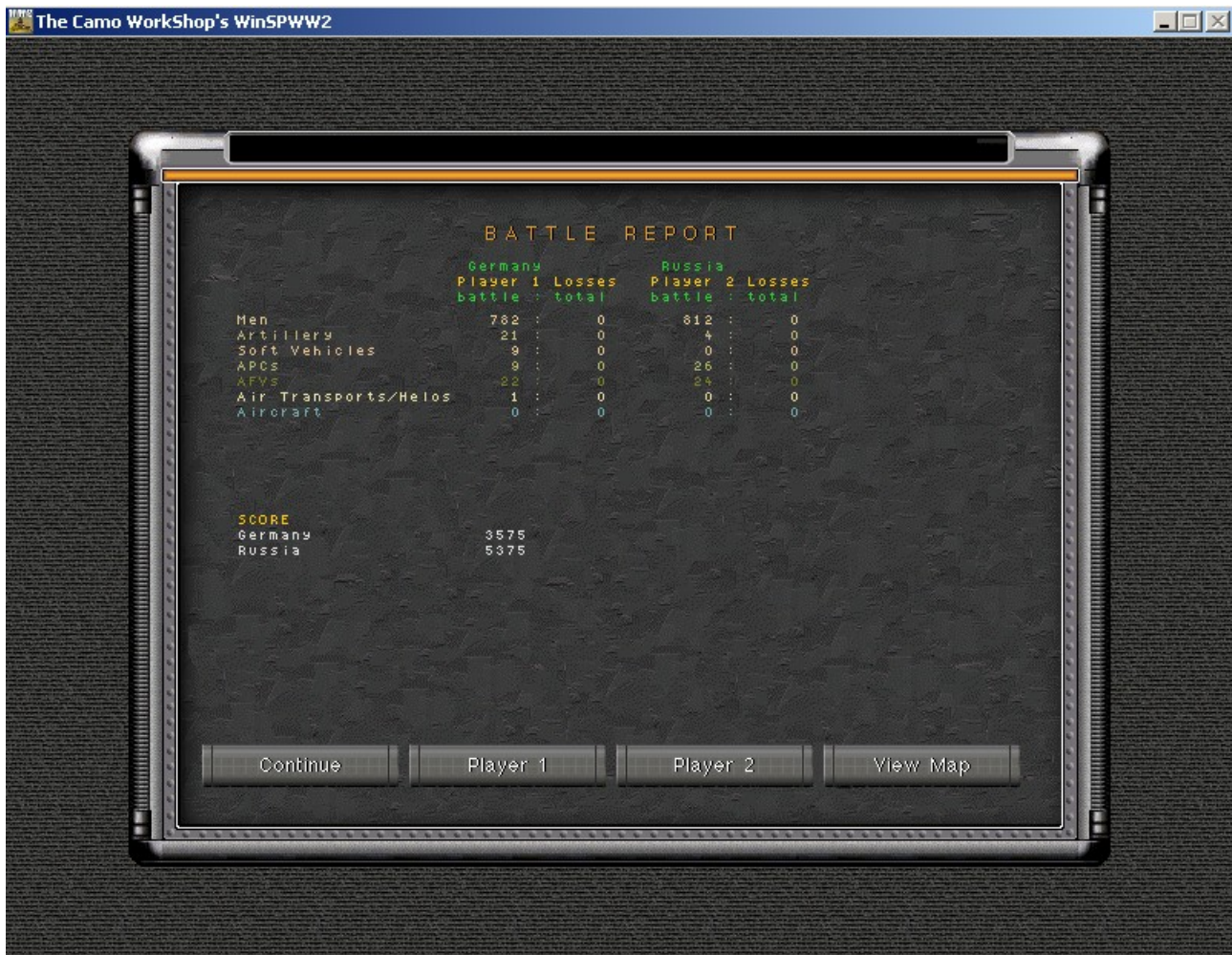
Again nothing eventful happens. However I do manage to capture all the flags in the north.



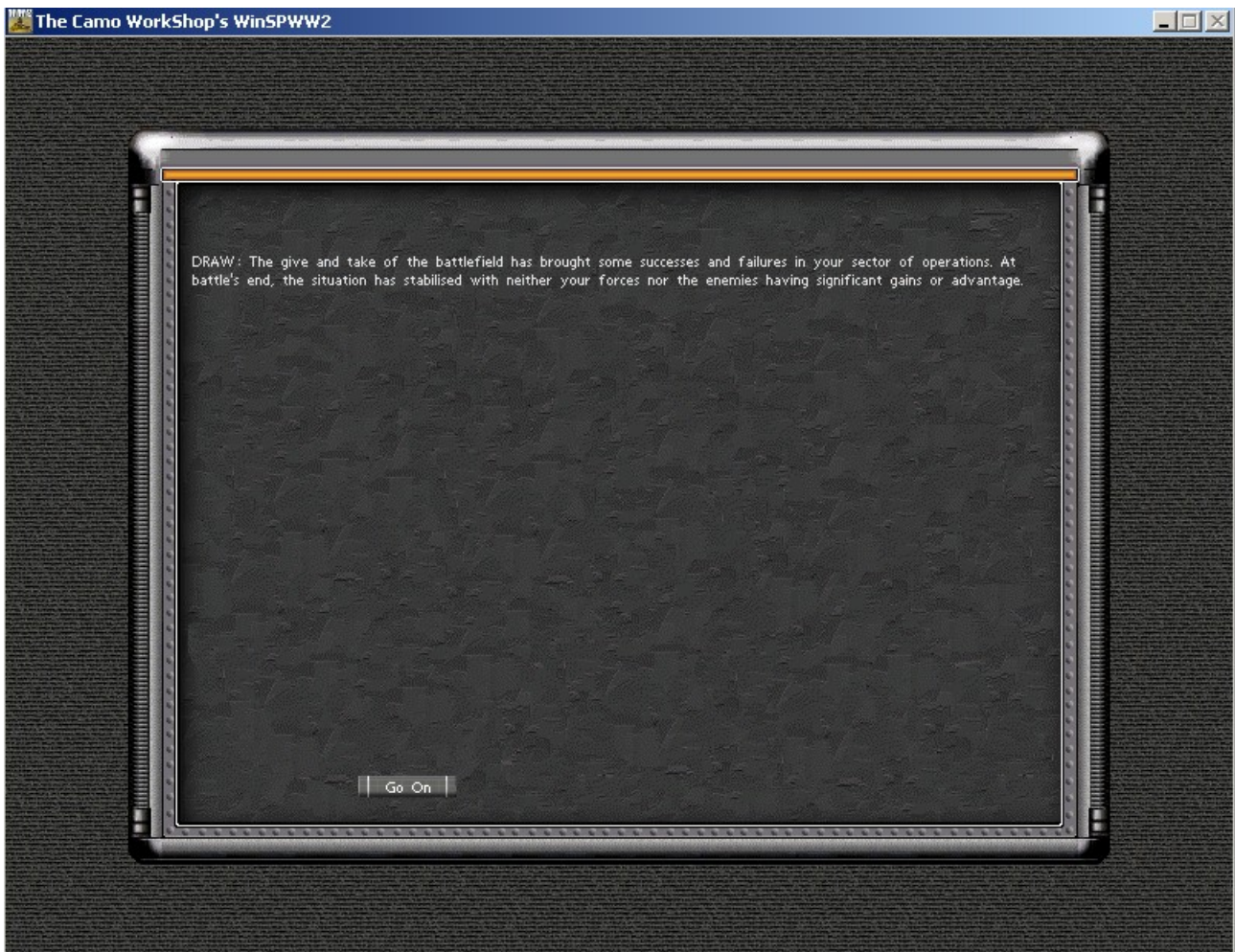
Turn 40

Last turn for me now and quite a few little actions happen that hopefully will help me get a better score. In Bystrik without their tank support 2 SS squads hit some trapped Soviets in a trench unfortunately although manage to rout a distant squad and a rifle squad the remaining survivors of an SMG squad cause five casualties to an SS rifle squad at 50 metres, the squad rallies and becomes pinned. Another squad which has LOS is out of shots but rallies to full capacity hopefully it means I get some reaction fire. Also near Bystrik an mg34 team routs an AA truck. In the north more firepower is exchanged between the Tigers and advancing. Once again I make a mistake and forget to take a picture. As I have nothing really left to move with I hit end turn and conclude this game. Once I receive the end screen I will post my thoughts for next time.

Results



Which means according to the scoring system it is a draw.



This to me is a quite good, because I really felt I had a marginal loss there but instead I got a draw which I am very happy with.

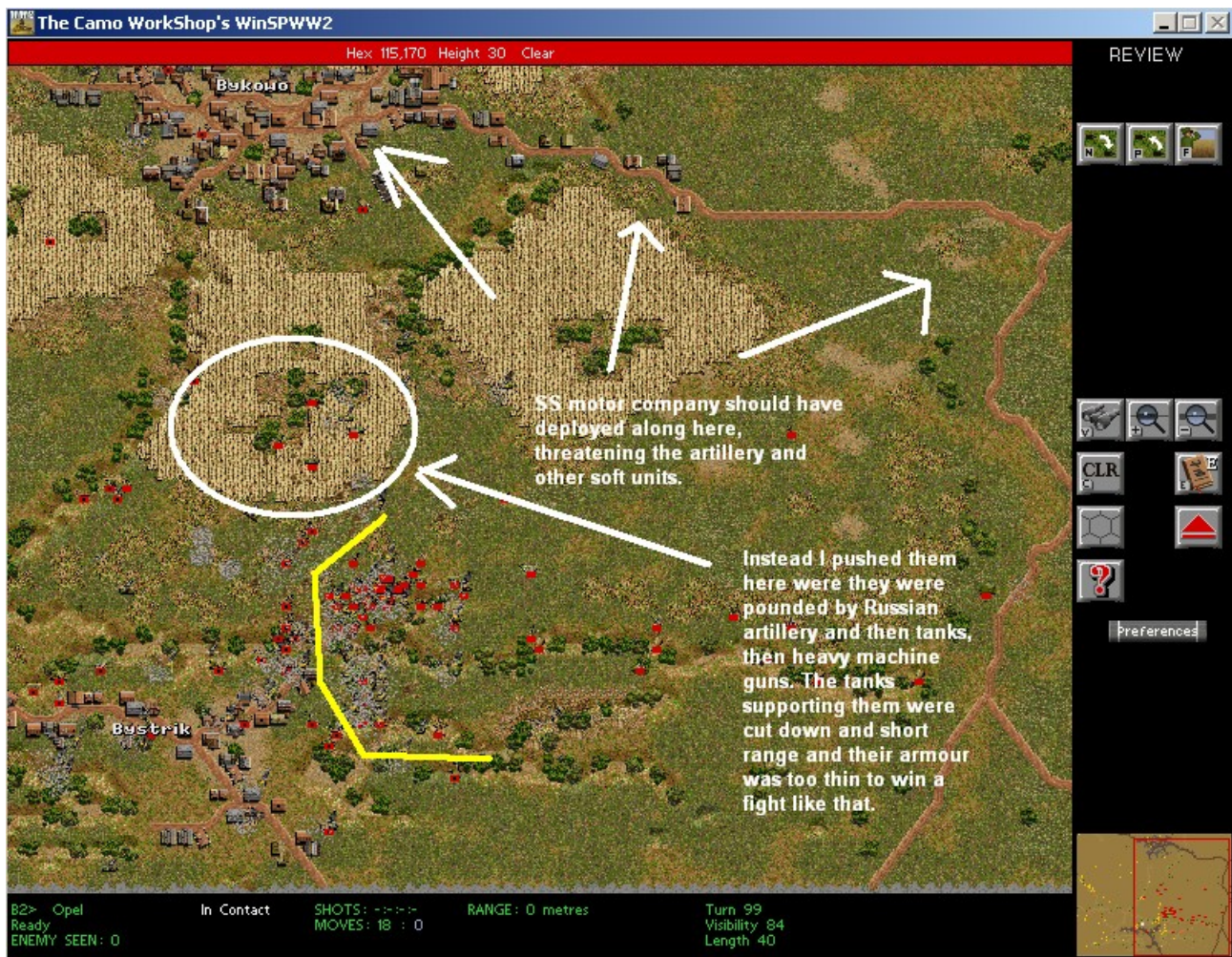
I lost a lot of expensive artillery like the 10.5cm tubes, and quite a few mortars, anti tank guns. I also lost nearly every tank I had and only had a few remaining. Looking at John's roster he still had some very strong tank forces that could challenge my units quite easily.

I think in terms of my force selection I made some poor choices but I on the whole I had a good force, it was merely poorly deployed and I think that next time I will take more time to develop a better deployment plan.

Breakdown

Men: I think in this regard I had some very solid troops, and they preformed very well in giving the Soviet Guards and mech troops a run for their money but at the end of the game many of my squads had suffered quite a lot of casualties which really affected their preformance, I kept good cohesion though for the most part and it seemed to work out well, in retrospect I should have kept the motor company in the centre instead of sending them across open group to attack the flags at Bystrik if I had kept them in that central strip and kept them moving I could have outflanked a major Russian position and forced John to divide up his armour a bit more, this would have been better for me, but I didn't really think that through all that well. I was really impressed by the firepower from my machine gun teams, but the basic SS rifle squad in early 1943 has no real anti tank power, they should be fighting infantry and focus on those, I had attatched several gun apc's but they

just got minced when Russian heavy artillery and tanks came on the scene. The tank destroyers were winners though I will definitely be using those again.



Artillery: I didn't have enough munitions trucks and enough means of moving them in case they started to suffer artillery fire, which happened. John took quite a few medium howitzers and these were very effective as were his rocket launchers, the rocket launchers caused so many casualties that in another game they would be the target of my counter battery fire very quickly. What annoys me is I had the opportunity to attack them with my tanks but I passed it up, I also should have used my kav and motorcycle units to hit those launchers if I could. Or at least harras them. My own rocket launchers preformed well and I really enjoyed using them, I think my artillery usage was not the best I should have moved my mobile mortars more and kept them in range with the infantry. The 88's were good but I felt they got slammed with Russian rocket, tank, machine gun and everything else too much and never managed to destroy much. The cost a lot of points though and I cannot justify using them again the way I did in this game.



Soft Vehicles: I think that more trucks for the artillery would have been justified perhaps next time purchasing some prime movers and holding them in reserve to move units might be an option, but in this game I was afraid to move my trucks about too much lest they be seen and targeted by rocket fire.

APC's: I hardly used any and the ones I did use lasted quite well except for the gun apc's which suffered heavily at the hands of Russian artillery to be honest I would have been better served by using the points spent on those apc's to buy more tanks or tank hunter teams since they might have survived for longer. In saying that though I did destroy quite a few of the Russian apc's but those were mainly taken out by the tank destroyers, which did an excellent job of shutting down a good portion of the Soviet stuff near Bystrik.



AFV's: Ahh the tanks! This is where I made some really bad tactical mistakes and did not at all stick to the strategy. The tanks I bought quite a few of were no match for the average Russian tank I came across, I lost two tanks to B-70 tanks with their 45mm gun... When faced with a T-34 or a KV tank the Panzer IV was no match at close range, I should have tried to use my tanks speed to try and outflank John's position a bit more instead of charging in head first, that was a job for the Tiger's in the north. To be honest I think if I had put more infantry in the north and had a few more Tiger tanks instead of some of the rubbish gun apc's then I could have hurt the Soviet forces at the bottom of the map more and maybe been a bit more successful in that attack across open ground. The Tiger tanks performed very well, and they never disappointed. Out of the 6 Tiger's I fielded I lost 2 and John lost the same amount of KV tanks, so the heavy tanks never really slugged it out, but it was fun using them.



Conclusion:

A very good game, I look forward to the next and hopefully I will learn a trick or two.