Eastern Front Series of Scenarios – notes on play balance mechanisms

All of the scenarios were written with a specific set of rules in mind and were constructed to be reasonably fair under that set of rules. However they have been converted to a generic presentation for greater application to other readers and in so doing it is possible, or indeed probable, that the restrictions and features of the original set of rules which made them fair are not reproduced in other sets. Clearly you will know your own rules and will therefore have to employ your common sense in modifying such things as the number of turns, what 'high' etc. morale actually is, how to adjust firepower within the system, whether the numbers of troops for each side are correct etc.

The following notes are provided as a set of potential mechanisms or explanatory notes which are common to all the scenarios provided once on one place so as not to repeat myself in every article.

- Substitutes for the specific equipment mentioned should be fairly straightforward and will obviously be necessary if the scenario is relocated in time or space. Much of it will be determined by your own collections and the relative value of different pieces in different theatres –Char Ds or Matilda IIs for KV1s and 2s, more T28s for the T35s, heavy cavalry or cataphracts for tank battalions, light troops for reconnaissance or motorcycle units etc.
- The terrain for the battle can be arranged as you see fit for your preferred rules. Some rules might not see one side or the other have any decent chance at victory without lots (or no) terrain. Use your experience/knowledge to flesh out what makes the scenario a reasonable challenge for each player.
- As is usually the case with my scenarios they are based on a stand being the equivalent of a platoon and a unit representing a battalion. It should be possible for you to scale this up (to say battalion/division) or down (to individual/squad or squad/company) as you require.
- The scale of the scenarios is one inch to 100 yards (about 18 inches to the mile) and 15-30 minutes to each. Casualties are inflicted on a stand by stand basis. Firing ranges are six inches for small arms, nine for HMGs and up to twelve for tanks. Indirect fire is conducted at considerably greater ranges but all fire is limited by spotting. Unless firing, infantry will be seen only within nine inches in the open or three if in cover. Vehicles are seen at double that. A platoon firing will be spotted at at least twelve inches regardless of cover. These numbers/space/time ratios are the sort of thing that, I would suggest, need to be maintained as far as possible in converting to another system.
- The terms suppression and pinned are for you to define – essentially they amount to not being able to function as normal – whether that be a loss of firepower or movement or both.
- The scenarios are predicated upon troops having morale failures resulting in enforced retreats, rallying from such retreats and routs from which they may not rally. Such mechanisms are common in rules prior to modern warfare but seemingly less so after 1900. If your preference is to have everyone fight to the last man and last bullet then some of the scenarios may be very unbalanced – the larger Soviet forces are expected to collapse and run away in some of the earlier scenarios and if they can not then the Germans could face a struggle.
- The ratings for the troops are generic to fit in with whatever system you are using but they should reflect primarily the morale and command and control of the troops rather than their equipment or competence. So for example I would limit the distance from their HQ within which stands might perform effectively – and make it appreciably worse for 'poor' troops. Such troops might also recover from suppression or pinning less quickly than other troops and have a lesser chance of

reacting to the enemy or being 'activated' in the first place. You get the picture – use your usual rules to tie the poor troops up in knots.

- You may wish to consider trying the represent the extremely variable nature of Soviet morale by assigning a value randomly as they take their first fire. Many units melted away somewhat ineffectually whilst others fought to the last man. A roll of three or fewer on 1D6 might make them respond poorly whilst a six could have them act as veterans. By 1942 however panics and wholesale retreats had become less likely so perhaps a roll of only one or two ought to result in the poorest morale under your rules.
- Pre-planned artillery - at the start of the game a three inch square template of fire is plotted for each battalion of artillery up to its number of turns of ammunition. Anything under the template on the turn the fire arrives is hit once.

I hope I have given enough guidance to allow you to tweak the set ups and OOBs as you see fit to make them fair under your preferred set of rules.