

Monster Tanks – Göringstrasse!

The Battle of Berlin – April 26th, 1945

Historical Overview: At the beginning of 1945, World War II was drawing to a bitter end. Allied forces had crossed the Rhine and were quickly advancing into German territory, while the Red Army was steam rolling through eastern Germany. Marshal Zhukov himself commanded the Soviet spearhead aimed at Berlin. Massive Soviet forces of tanks and guard infantry were marching on the German capital, which Stalin's propaganda had dubbed 'Berlog' - the Beast's Lair. Bloody last stand battles raged between the Red Army and the desperate German forces defending their capital. Deep in the reinforced concrete below the broken city, the German Fuehrer Adolf Hitler continued to descend into madness, moving nonexistent army divisions across maps as he put all of his hope into the illusion of Wunderwaffen - secret weapons capable of beating back the overwhelmingly superior Allied and Soviet forces and winning the war. Unfortunately for Hitler, the secret weapons never materialized. With their backs literally against the wall, the ragtag defenders of Berlin were forced to rely on blood and iron. Wehrmacht soldiers, press ganged old men, armed Hitler youth and foreign Waffen SS fanatics desperately tried to stem the Red flood, hoping to beat back the aggressors even at the cost of their own lives. All to no avail - the Red Army was triumphant, liberating Berlin by the sheer force of their numerical supremacy.

What, however, if Hitler's Wunderwaffe had become reality, even if only to the least degree? What if German manufacturers had been able to finalize one of their 'futuristic' weapons, one that in reality had passed the testing stage and was in actual production? Would those last giants of hubris and steel have been able to prolong the Reich's existence, even if just for a few days or weeks?

Firefight Overview: Through the suburbs of Berlin, Soviet tanks and hordes of infantry are steadily advancing towards its downtown sector, brushing away any form of resistance. However, at Göringstrasse, a street leading directly to Hitler's last bunker, the Red Army for the first time meets real resistance. Fanatic soldiers of the French Waffen SS Division "Charlemagne" are barring the way. These experienced combat soldiers prefer death in combat to a life in a French prison. They make the Russians pay dearly in blood for every advance of an inch. Surprisingly, the French SS soldiers receive reinforcements in the form of two tanks formerly unknown to the Soviet - hulking monsters that can shred Soviet attacks within seconds. These tanks are the 'Maus' and the 'Panther F', experimental German tanks issuing from the secret "Kummersdorf" laboratory. They are rushed through final production and are thrown into battle at the special request of the Fuehrer himself. After hearing of two attacks being repulsed by the Wunderwaffen, General Chuikov, the hero of Stalingrad and Zhukov's champion in Berlin, decides to send in his own big guns. The super heavy "Joseph Stalin 3" tanks, beasts deserving of a chance to spearhead an attack on the German monster tanks. Using the JS-3 heavy tanks, the local Soviet commander should hopefully be able to break through the line of the French SS combat veterans to blast open the proverbial gate to Hitler's last retreat...

Historical Notes:

The Panzerkampfwagen VIII "Maus" ("Mouse") was a super heavy tank developed by Ferdinand Porsche around 1943-1944. It turned out to be a purely utopian project, sheer megalomania fueled by Hitler's delight in overblown projects. Weighing 190 tons and armed with a 12.8cm gun, nearly all plans to ever actually field the Maus were dismissed by the time the first prototype was finished in 1944. Germany's resources were too sparse to allow for a project such as the Maus. Only the prototype was built to completion and the Germans were to have destroyed it as the Red Army was about to conquer Kummersdorf, where the Maus was designed.

Some sources, however, claim that the Maus was actually used to fend off the Red Army, being destroyed without having much of an impact on the battle. All remaining manufactured parts for Maus production were reused in the defense of Berlin 1945. In fact, some gun turrets were actually built into bunkers as heavy artillery. These converted Maus gun turrets actually fired on the Red Army several times - but as a piece of static artillery rather than as a tank. Oddly enough, German engineers designed a tank even heavier than the Maus - detailed plans were finished for the 'Landkreuzer P-1000 Ratte' (the 'Land Cruiser P-1000 Rat'), a tank weighing 1000 tons and carrying as main armament a gun turret designed for a battleship. This monstrosity, however, was too much even by Hitler's standard. Although it would have been ready for construction, the Ratte never made it past the blueprints stages.

The Panther F was designed as an upgrade to the Panzer V 'Panther' tank. It was to be equipped with a much leaner turret and with range-finding equipment. Much of its design was well ahead of its time, and its blueprints supposedly had significant influences on the design of many post-war tanks developed by Soviet and Allied companies.

The IS-3, "Ioseph-Stalin-3", was the only one of all these giants to actually make it into serial production, beginning in May 1945. However, the IS-3 never saw combat against the Germans, only against the Japanese on the Manchurian front. In this "What-If" firefight, we have decided to predate the production of the IS-3 by a few months to allow it to brave its maiden voyage in the streets of Berlin.

The stats for all of the tanks in this game are based on actual blueprint and prototype data.

Waffen SS Division 'Charlemagne'. After the German army realized that the war would drag on for quite a while, the Waffen-SS started to recruit heavily from friendly local populace, forming entire divisions composed of foreign soldiers. These included French, Danish, Russians, Bosniaks, Croats, Cossacks, and others that were willing to fight for Germany for other political and nationalistic reasons. Even more than 1,000 Indians volunteered to fight under the swastika! Not all of them were much of a help, though: the Bosniak Division was better known for brutal atrocities than for battle prowess while the Indian Legion, stationed in France, was more prone to fall victim to the pleasantries of French culture than the attacks of French partisans. In a strange twist of history, the last defenders of Hitler's Reichskanzlei were actually French Waffen SS soldiers of the SS Division "Charlemagne". Much to the surprise of war correspondents, the soldiers of Charlemagne proved to be combat hardened fanatics that would not willingly give up an inch of ground. The French held off the Soviets with a death defying determination, impressing even their opponents. The last soldiers to receive the Iron Cross were soldiers of Charlemagne, although only a handful of members saw the end of the war. Some, and many other German SS soldiers, would again bear arms together a few years later in Vietnam, this time fighting under the French flag.

Commanders: 2 **Initiative:** Soviets on Round 1.

CAP Allocation per Round: Germans 8 CAPs Soviets 10 CAPs each. **(CAPs adjustments cannot fall under 4 for either side.)**

Cards: Shuffle all action and bonus cards under #40. Each commander receives 2 cards on round 1. In each round thereafter, the German player receives 1 additional card and the Soviet player receives 2 additional cards.

Map Setup: Map 5. Place **Road Blocks** on D04, D06, C15 and E17.

Place **Rubble** counters on C05, D05, D08, E03, F07, F13, G08, I05 and J11.

Place **Trenches** on G09, G11, H13, G15, E16.

Place **Barbed Wire** on F10. Place a **Bridge** counter (represents a Soviet pontoon bridge) on B11.

Place **Control Markers**, German side up, on Hex C10 and J10.



German Forces: Defenders of Berlin

Kampfgruppe Kummersdorf with Prototypes

Setup Round 1: Place anywhere on Map 5.



1x Maus



1x Panther F



1x Flak 18
Place hidden

Elements of the 33rd Waffen-SS Grenadier-Div. "Charlemagne"

Setup Round 1: Place in any Terrain that gives a DM-Bonus.

2 Units may be set up hidden. Hasty Defense may be placed with any unit. Place Roadblock anywhere on Map 5.



2x Pioneers



4x Rifles



3x LMG



1x HMG



1x Panzer-schreck



1x 8cm Mortar



6x Hasty Defense



1x Roadblock

Orders: For many years we have been fighting for the glory of the Reich - now, let us make our final stand and die with honor! Most of us will never see another sun rise - let us ensure that the Soviet sun rises to face myriads of Soviet graves. Through the kindness of the Fuehrer, we have received two secret weapons. With their help, we will bury the Bolsheviks in the ruins of our beloved capital.

Victory Points:

- 1VP - Immediately score each Soviet unit eliminated.
- 2VP - Immediately score for destroying the JS-3.
- 1VP - Per control marker at the end of each round.

Special Rules

Panzerfaust: German pioneer and rifle units have access to Panzerfausts (like a Weapon card) and can fire them as an action for 4 APs. Apply the following Firepower: **Blue 10 / Red -1 FP**, Range 1. Short range and CC-modifiers apply. If the unmodified attack 2d6 result is < 5 (less than 5), the supply of Panzerfausts is exhausted and can no longer be used by the Germans. *The Panzerfaust ("Tank Fist") was one of the most effective designs of the Reich: Simple, very cheap to produce and easy to use, it proved to be probably the most famous anti-tank weapon of World War 2 and was the basis for countless other anti-tank systems. During the defense of the Reich and especially in the narrow streets of the German cities, the Panzerfaust was the first and only line of defense against the Soviet tanks.*

Soviet infantry (rifles and SMG) can use the Panzerfaust too; although they have to pay 5 AP for fire one as an action. If the unmodified attack 2d6 result is ≤ 5 (equal or less than 5), the supply of Panzerfausts is exhausted and can no longer be used by the Soviets. *The Soviets did not possess any comparable anti-tank weapon, but they were quite happy to use any Panzerfaust they could lay their hands on. Finding them in conquered German army positions did not prove to be difficult: The Reich produced over 6 million of them, leaving more than enough for Soviet use.*

Ammunition shortages: The German player cannot modify any attack die roll with CAPs.

Mon honneur s'appelle fidelité: All SS-Units treat all hit counters as a "Foot unnerved" counter. The only exception is the "Foot KILLED" counter, which still counts as an instant kill. *Just like regular SS, the French Waffen-SS-soldiers of Charlemagne insisted that "their Honor was Loyalty". Soviet forces highly respected and feared the SS and Waffen-SS as enemies, and the soldiers of Charlemagne lived up to this respect. During the defense of Berlin, nobody fought fiercer or with less concern for their own survival than the French SS-soldiers. They knew well that life had nothing in store for them anymore and history proves them right: The few of them captured alive and handed to the French authorities were abused in prison and then executed without trial.*

Red Flood: Destroyed Soviet T34-85 and KV-85 tanks may attempt to re-enter the game during the round after they are destroyed. At the beginning of the round after one of these tanks is destroyed, and after Soviet CAPs have been reset, a 2D6 die result of 7 or higher immediately allows a tank to be removed from the CAP track to re-enter the battle as a reinforcement that can enter from the northern edge on round 2 or, from round 3 on, either the eastern, northern or western edge of the map. A 2D6 result of 6 or less results in a tank being permanently out of the game and remaining on the CAP track. This die roll may not be modified with CAPs. The German player still gains VPs every time he destroys a Soviet unit, including re-constituted tanks. *The Red Army stormed Berlin with exceeding numerical superiority, outnumbering the city's defenders by far. Tanks especially were churned out by Soviet factories in numbers large enough to deprive German commanders of any respite.*

Round 1
Initiative ★
Control C10
☒ 1VP ★ 1VP
Control J10
☒ 1VP ★ 2VP

Round 2
Control C10
☒ 1VP ★ 1VP
Control J10
☒ 1VP ★ 2VP

Round 3
★ Reinforcements
Control C10
☒ 1VP ★ 1VP
Control J10
☒ 1VP ★ 2VP

Round 4
Control C10
☒ 1VP ★ 1VP
Control J10
☒ 1VP ★ 2VP

Round 5
Control C10
☒ 1VP ★ 1VP
Control J10
☒ 1VP ★ 2VP
Firefight Ends



Soviet Forces: 8th Guards Army

Mixed Soviet Assault Forces

Enter from the northern edge of Map 5.



1x JS-3



2x T34/85



1x KV-85



8x Rifles

Round 3: Soviet Infiltration Force

Enter from the eastern or western edge of Map 5 (choose one edge).



1x Pantera



4x SMG-Rifles

Orders: We are so close! Between us and the innermost heart of the Reich are only a few flimsy Frenchmen and these monsters the Nazis have thought up in their secret labs. Never mind! They are not the only ones able to rely on heavy fire power. Chuikov has sent us some JS-3 to tackle these German abominations. We will slash through their defenses: Nobody stops the glorious advance of the Red Army - no secret German tanks, no French Nazis, nobody! As soon as we control the Göringstrasse, we can send our forces against the Fuehrer himself - onward for Stalin!

Victory Points:

- 2VP - Immediately score each German unit, except the Maus, eliminated.
- 7VP - Immediately score for destroying the Maus-Prototype.
- 1VP - At the end of each round for controlling Hex C10.
- 2VP - At the end of each round for controlling Hex J10.

Soviet Reinforcements Enter Round 3

5



Soviet Forces Enter Round 1

Soviet Reinforcements Enter Round 3