

# OCS CLARIFICATIONS & HOUSE RULES (Recent Entries in Blue)

## Introductory Remarks

This packet contains official rules clarifications for OCS v4 (both series rules generally and the special rules for the various games). It also contains “house rules” that are essentially additional optional rules similar to those found in Section 21 of the rules.

Errata for the individual games is not maintained on this PDF. Look for current errata at this link: <http://www.gamersarchive.net/theGamers/archive/>

New players probably shouldn't use any of the official options or house rules; just concentrate on learning to apply the standard rules. Veteran players can use them if they want to tweak certain parts of the model.

All players should note that neither Dean nor I have included these as a sort of “super-advanced most-realistic” set of rules additions. In fact most of the OCS inner-circle is reluctant to stray far from the standard rules, and applies the ten official options and these house rules on a very limited basis. With this in mind, I have tried to include guidance on which are best applied to any particular situation.

The “House Rules” were submitted from a variety of OCS players. I've selected for this list only the ones that I'd actually consider playing with — there were some others that were just a little too fiddly. Because playability is so important in the time-consuming games of the series, I've also made a few modifications to the submissions.

You can think of these as points of departure for your own house rules, but one of my goals in compiling this list is to “standardize” house rules (at least to a certain extent).

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## The Ten Official Options

21.1 Recon. Never have used it, and probably never will. Too much work.

21.2 Proportional Strength. I use this about half the time — no strong feelings either way so just go with flow. The 2- and 3-step divisions seem

fine with standard rule, but the 4-steppers seem a little more nuanced with this option.

21.3 Independents. I tend not to use this rule, but don't despise it.

21.4 Long Range Aircraft Effects. Guys who use Proportional Strength tend to like this one, and this is my favorite optional. It does make range-counting a lot more tedious though (since so many missions will be close to that half-range shift).

21.5 Re-Basing Limits. I use this one about half the time, but often forget the part that applies to arriving reinforcements.

21.6 Convention or New-Player Tempo. I don't think I've used it, but it makes sense in certain situations (the name says it all).

21.7 Divisional Lines. Never have used it, and probably never will. Too big a change from normal rules.

21.8 Attacking Empties. This rule was originally only applied to cases where a barrage wiped out the unit you wanted to attack, but now is more wide opened. It would take experience to grasp and prepare for the ramifications of this rule, which will make life miserable for the strategic defender. In general, I don't like it because it is too big a change from normal rules (and the cry-babies should have had reserves to move into that hex made vacant by barrage).

21.9 Reactive Artillery. Baltic Gap was tested quite a bit with this rule, which was going to be a standard v4 change until it got killed. It makes a big difference, and I think I'd like it better if there was a simple way to make sure arty can only fire once a turn.

21.10 Anti-Raider Rules. These were a hot topic during OCS v4 development, but now are sort of a fading memory (I don't think they get used much). You can see in this section both a “Dean Rule” and a “John Rule” (showing different philosophies). Dean's is the Godzilla option. He thinks guys should just be reasonable, and not do things that are gamey (and common sense should be applied instead of a formal rule). The Shift-Off option is

different, in that it is applied to precisely-defined events. I think the attrition effects in OCS slam a little too fast, and this rule keeps lines of supply open a bit longer. It's an odd thing, though: I like this rule but had forgotten about it until I sat down to add this section to this pdf.

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## OCS v4 Clarifications & Errata

9.14c Transport Point capture usually rounds up or down to full point increments (only round to token-size trucks if game's counter mix includes them). SP capture (even when loaded on a Transport Point) should always round to tokens.

Examples of 25% capture on a 1-point loaded truck in various situations:

1. If there are no token-size trucks in the counter mix: 1T of supply is captured, and the entire truck point + 3T of supply escapes.
2. If there are token-size trucks in the counter mix: the capture/escape of both trucks and SP would be 1T/3T.
3. If it was an organic truck (which have no token-size replacements) being overrun, but otherwise same situation as #2: Capture a 1T generic truck + 1T of supply, but allow the organic truck to still escape with 3T on it. (Yes, an extra 1T of trucks has appeared due to “rounding.”)

9.14c Extenders collapse to within any hex within their special Draw Range, not the standard 5 mp +1 hex.

10.0a It takes at least 1 point to “get on the barrage table” (before shifts are applied). No 0-point barrages allowed!

10.0c Addition: Unspotted hipshoots are not allowed.

10.0e Even if a declared air barrage mission is completely aborted (so no roll on the Barrage Table), it still counts against the per-phase limit.

12.3d “Normal” weather is of the summer/clear variety. So ignore “abnormal” weather changes that increase costs (so supply paths can benefit from a frozen river, but don't suffer from increased mud costs).

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12.8 On the Attrition Table, only count the out-of-supply steps in the hex to see if the drm applies.

12.8a Important change: Units do not need trace supply on the turn they make an Air Drop.

13.2a A Transport Point can “pause” its movement to use loaded supply to pay for all kinds of fueling and construction/repair being done in that same phase. The “pause move” can never be used by a Transport Point to pay for upcoming combat (including overruns) or barrage costs.

13.3g RR Repair units are not restricted to merely pushing forward the railhead marking where standard and wide gauges meet; they can for example use Strat Mode to move ahead of the normal re-gauging to start working out in what is essentially the middle of nowhere. “No leapfrogging” is narrowly restricted to not having a second repair unit use rail movement on newly converted track to get into position to extend the converted track.

13.5a(1) A ZOC cannot be negated for rebuilds, so remove “un-negated” from second sentence.

13.6b Add a note that reinforcements can arrive by rail, per 13.3c#1.

13.8b The 2-hex radius is blocked if Truck MA to the hex in question would be impossible (due to prohibited terrain, enemy units, or ZOC).

13.8c An HQ can entrain itself (even though switching to Move Mode when moving by rail).

13.8b Construction and repairs are immediate (no need to wait until the very end of the phase). The same is true of captured ports and airfields: they can be used in same phase captured.

14.2e It has been noted that a player can essentially perform a fighter sweep during a barrage segment under the guise of a barrage mission. This is ok.

14.3d In Interception air combat, the Interceptor is treated as the non-moving player (so essentially neither side can voluntarily abort).

14.7d Unspotted Hipshoots cannot be made using Barrage vs Facility Table.

14.9d Ground units can change to Move Mode prior to Air Transport in Movement Phase, but cannot “flip” orientation during Reaction or Exploitation. SP cannot move before/after a mission due to “leapfrog” restrictions. Other ground units must be released reserves (or Exploit-marked) to move (and possibly attack) before/after a mission during Reaction or Exploitation — all other units being air transported in these phases essentially have an MA of zero (and cannot attack). Note that units moving before/after the mission in Reaction (and Exploit-marked units during Exploitation) have their MA halved twice, for a total of x1/4 MA.

14.9e Transport Missions are allowed to fly from Base X to Base Y, and from there to Base Z (where plane goes inactive). Cargo can be loaded at both X and Y (to full capacity of aircraft at both stops), and then be unloaded at both Y and Z. The range of the mission would be figured for whichever leg is longer. Base Y always a mission hex for flak purposes, and Base Z is too if any cargo is unloaded there.

14.10b Important change: Drops that require Prior Planning can *only* be done in Movement Phase (so no need to plot an exact phase any more). See also the change to 12.8a.

18.3b The reference in final sentence should be 18.3g.

18.3c All LC in a stack are treated as “one individual ship” for target and DG purposes.

18.3d(A) After a hit, a target is marked DG. Note that if the stack is already DG, this will cause an extra loss (and then DG gets removed).

20.0a Breakdowns can also be created during advance/retreat after combat.

21.7 “Separated by 3 or fewer hexes” means no more than 2 hexes in between the hexes occupied by the divisions.

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### Dean's Gamey/Not Gamey List

1. Absorbing DG/Strat breakdowns into divisions in order for them to lose their Strat/DG status and/or possibly gain reserve mode.

*Gamey, unless following the original rule intent (simplification, not advantage).*

2. Absorbing breakdowns into divisions in order for them to lose their Low/No Ammo status for free.

*Gamey.*

3. Moving organic trucks by themselves in reserve mode to get the 25% movement boost.

*Not Gamey.*

4. Sending single units through a hole in the line to spot for barrages against enemy reserves.

*Not Gamey*

5. Putting a non-moving arty in move mode and barraging with the reduced token cost in order to know a hex's RE strength.

*Gamey.*

6. Putting a non-moving arty in Move Mode and barraging because that's all the supply you have on hand.

*Not gamey... just the best the guy could do. It's obviously a fine line between this and #4 above.*

7. Suicidal raids by units scheduled to be removed next turn.

*Gamey.*

8. When attacking with two units of equal AR, selecting the one about to be removed to take the loss.

*Not gamey. Wasn't done intentionally like the banzai attack above.*

9. Using your precious repls to rebuild the 6-5-8 panzer battalion that stays in theater the whole scenario, not the identical 6-5-8 that gets removed next month.

*Not gamey.*

10. Should a player take the time to see when a unit is going to be transferred off-map? Since transfers

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can come from the dead pile, it might be time for an overrun attempt. Is it OK to push recklessly hard with units that will be leaving next turn?

*Gamey.*

11. Satisfying withdrawal demands by removing units in pockets and/or OOS.

*Not Gamey.*

12. Is it OK to consolidate units from two formations, so that the units from the formation that is leaving are all dead and the living units are now all in a formation that is staying?

*Gamey.*

13. Is it acceptable to transfer infantry divisions with 1 step remaining rather than full-strength ones?

*Not Gamey.*

14. Is it OK to put virtually all the independent units that need fuel together under one HQ to save gas?

*Not Gamey. Makes other parts of the front weak, but have at it.*

15. In Case Blue it is actually quite easy to keep all the Russian AR4 units broken down into single steps so that they can cover the maximum number of units with lower action ratings (and not be eligible to be absorbed). Is that OK?

*Gamey.*

16. Is it ok to plan airdrop missions every turn on the off chance that the mission is needed? Or should one wait till the pocket is actually formed?

*Gamey.*

17. Can you use the Consolidation rule to transfer a full organic truck from one division in exchange for an empty one in another?

*Gamey.*

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## OCS v4 House Rules

### 2.3 Initiative Rolls

The player who went first the previous turn wins tied rolls.

*Dean's Grade: A*

### 4.5a ZOCs & Ports (Change)

As with Rail Transportation, create two categories of Port Operations with respect to ZOC. Handling of a port being used for Trace Supply is unchanged (negation is possible). But when Sea Cap is being used, a ZOC can no longer be negated.

*John's Comment: This is a nice middle ground between v3 and v4 handling of ports, and is recommended especially when upgrading older titles to v4.*

### 4.9 Fog of War (Refined)

Change this to allow peeking under markers, etc. only when an Attack-Capable unit is adjacent to the enemy stack. In addition, top Active air unit must be a fighter.

*Dean's Grade: D*

*John's Comment: I prefer this level of Fog (like it was in v3).*

### 4.9 Fog of War (Decreased)

For ease of play, aircraft at a base are spread out to one side with Active planes faced forward and Inactive planes faced rearward.

*Dean's Grade: A*

### 5.8d Strat Mode Stacking Limit

Allow just one division-sized unit in Strat Mode to end a phase in a hex. There can be other units in the hex, in Strat Mode and/or other modes; this stacking restriction only seeks to prevent stacking multiple divisions in Strat Mode. Note a multi-unit formation counts as the "one division" for this purpose (even if only part of the formation is in the hex).

*John's Comment: Strat Mode isn't important in very many games, but this rule prevents abuses where it does come into play.*

### 9.4e Anti-Tank (AT) Effects

Give infantry divisions "light" AT Effects starting in 1944.

*Dean's Grade: C*

*John's Comment: The only trouble I have with this is that I don't like the "x1.5" multiplier and this just makes the harder math a bit more common.*

### 9.11d Effects of Step Loss

4-Step divisions that are down to their last step are x1/4 on attack and x1/2 on defense.

*Dean's Grade: D*

### 9.14e Hedgehog Reduction

Reduce a captured hog by one level.

*Dean's Grade: B*

*John's Comment: This is standard in Baltic Gap, and helps eliminate map clutter.*

### 10.0 Barrage Losses

Randomize which step is lost by rolling a die. (This can get awkward if more than six steps are in the hex, but you can figure it out.)

*Dean's Grade: B*

### 14.2a Aircraft Barrages

Only allow three planes to be subject to flak and to actually drop bombs (there can still be a 4th plane in the mission, serving as a fighter escort).

*John's Comment: This makes air barrage less effective. Barrages were made more effective in v4, so while this is a pretty big change for a House Rule it's not off the charts. The playability advantage is important: making it easier to randomize which plane takes a flak loss (since 4 planes was a pain when rolling a d6).*

### 12.5e HQ Fuel Markers

A fueled HQ loses its marker if it moves to a different hex.

*Dean's Grade: B*

*John's Comment: I think fuel markers, and the Stugs being fueled, become too powerful if the HQ is allowed to move and throw from a second location.*

### 12.8e Breakout Mod

On the first turn a unit finds itself in a situation allowing Breakout, the restrictions in "a" and "b" are waved and the success chance is boosted to 4-6. Furthermore, wagons and trucks are now allowed to Breakout on the first turn (roll for each point separately) they are out of trace.

*Dean's Grade: A (may very well be made standard)*

### 13.5 Replacements Changes

There are five inter-related changes:

1. Repls must be spent on the turn they are generated (use'em or lose'em).
2. Steps now cost either 1x Eq or 1x Pax. Anything with any Eq in the printed replacement cost is now 1x

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Eq; otherwise the new cost is 1x Pax.

3. Dead Pile rebuilds can appear at any HQ in trace supply. On-map rebuilds can still occur within two hexes of any HQ in trace supply (assume newly-arrived Pax or Eq is with the HQ).
4. Divisions of the highest AR in a given army can only be rebuilt from Dead Pile. (For the Germans this typically means AR5 divisions have to be in Dead Pile to be rebuilt; for the Soviets it is typically the AR4 divisions.) The player can delay arrival until the division is completely rebuilt.

*Dean's Grade: A (may very well be made standard)*

*John's Comment: Seems like a too big change to me. This change will obviously appeal to players who think rebuilds are too few over the course of a long campaign.*

## 13.7 Formation Markers (Refined)

Formation markers must always be in the hex with at least one Attack-Capable unit of the formation. If the units in the formation are in Reserve Mode, the reserve marker can be placed in the off-map (hidden) stack. When adjacent to an enemy Attack-Capable unit, the full stack being represented must be placed on-map.

*Dean's Grade: C*

*John's Comment: I think this just fleshes out how to handle these markers. But just so players are handling them the same way, the specifics aren't all that important.*

## 13.10 Tiger Tanks (New)

A Tiger battalion becomes DG at the end of any movement segment in during which it spent more than 1/2 its current movement allowance.

In combat or overrun, if the defender's terrain choice is Clear...

- a) a defending Tiger makes all attacking armor and mech x1.
- b) an attacking Tiger makes all armor and mech in its hex x2 (regardless of defending AT).

*Dean's Grade: D*

## 14.4f Flak Resolution

If the modified roll is 13 or higher, after the loss is taken the strongest remaining plane is aborted away before the barrage table is consulted (so its factors don't count).

*John's Comment: I started using this when playing around with Sicily under v4 (naval stacks have enough flak to warrant another layer of flak results). Seems like an ok option for all games.*

## 19.0d Port Repair

Cost is changed to that of the current port capacity or 1 SP, whichever is the lesser amount. So for example if the current (damaged) capacity is 2T, it costs 2T to repair a level.

*Dean's Grade: C*

*John's Comment: Repair of small ports seems crazy at 1 SP per level, hence this option.*

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## BALTIC GAP Clarifications

1.5a Soviet flotillas are treated as LC for movement purposes, which means they can enter coastal hexes and move along estuaries (including the connection between Lake Peipus and Lake Pskov).

## BALTIC GAP House Rules

### Rigid Soviet Fronts

Until Riga is captured, Soviet SP must remain within its Front Boundary, as defined below. Note SP can be drawn and thrown across these boundaries, and can be "looped" around boundaries when being transported (just so long as it doesn't end a phase in the wrong zone).

3rd Baltic: from 36.xx to 62.xx

2nd Baltic: from 21.xx to 35.xx

1st Baltic: from 1.xx to 20.xx

*John's Comment: If Soviets are doing too well, this is one way to slow them down a bit.*

### No More Draws or Sudden Death

**Don't end a game when a 10 VP lead is reached. Keep playing until the bitter end or until one side concedes that defeat is inevitable.**

**If the game ends in the Draw range (that is, neither side has a 5 VP lead), count the game as a Marginal Victory for the player who won the last VP scored (even if the other side has the higher overall VP score).**

*John's Comment: No more Sudden Death eliminates some*

*odd tactics that used to make sense in the short run. The change to scoring a Draw situation is designed to make the game's final situation the tie-breaker. Both require players to take a longer view.*

## More Flexible "Steps"

Change the "Steps" replacement type in 1.10a to allow a combat unit of that AR or less to be rebuilt.

*John's Comment: This helps the Soviets avoid some "I have nothing to rebuild" annoyances, and also lets the Germans get back their destroyed HQs more quickly.*

OCS House Rule 5.8d, which affects Strat Mode stacking, makes use of this mode more realistic — harder to use near enemy — but keep in mind it has a balancing impact. Use it if you think the Soviets are winning too often or too easily.

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## DAK Clarifications

### Minefields

These extra movement costs are treated like "terrain" so supply draw and throw are affected.

Reminder: Rule 17.0d means that bad weather no longer affects refit or forces air units to go inactive.

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## TUNISIA Clarifications

### Supply Sources

Keep in mind that only the listed ports — Tunis and Bizerte for the Axis, and Bone for the Allies — are possible supply sources. The others, even when their capacity is 1 SP or more, cannot be used for trace supply.

OCS House Rule 4.5a, which changes port-handling in enemy ZOC, works well in this game.

Reminder: Rule 17.0d means that Mud no longer affects refit or forces air units to go inactive.

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## SICILY Clarifications

### Supply Sources

Keep in mind that ports don't function as supply sources when reduced to a cap less than 1 SP.

### ALT Results

Units surviving a "Failure" result disembark. (It's like the "Mixed" result, just with more losses.)

## SICILY House Rules

### Set-Up Change

Trainbusting markers that replace the "interdiction" locations (see errata) can be placed within 2 of the listed hex.

*John's Comment: Players might want to allow free placement of these markers (anywhere not in a enemy PZ).*

### Off-Map Air Reduction (change)

Roll a die for which off-map base must take an air loss: 1= Sardinia, 2= Rome(2), 3= Rome(3), 4= Naples, 5= Paglia, 6= Allied choice. If chosen base is empty, make it Allied choice. The air unit at the base taking the loss is randomly chosen.

*John's Comment: This makes the Axis lose a "good" step now and then.*

### Naval Release Points (addition)

Air missions flown against ships in these hexes sometimes "get lost" and there is no combat (or flak) at all. Roll 1d6: the mission cannot find its naval targets (and must return to base inactive) on a roll of 1-3.

*John's Comment: Use this rule and/or the OCS House Rule 14.4 to help the Allied navy survive using v4 rules.*

OCS House Rule 4.5a, which changes port-handling in enemy ZOC, works well in this game.

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## BURMA Clarifications

1.4e Note the "mountain roads" effect also applies to barrage.

1.6 Japanese units can forage even when tokens are available for "eating off the map."

1.7 Per the errata, no trainbusting is allowed in this game. So only unspotted Air Barrage missions are affected by this rule.

3.5a The v4 rules make standard the special "turn-around" rule, so ignore this reference. Note that the Air Transport Success Table in the series charts is used (there isn't a special one for Burma II).

3.5b Addition. A glider + transport combination can perform a base transfer mission between the Ledo and Silchar off-map bases (destination cannot be an on-map base).

3.6d A Chindit Clearing is not a "friendly hex" for Air Transport Success Table rolls until the start of a phase following its occupation by Allied units.

3.7a The US 823 Engineer is now treated as a Chindit and operates under the limits/provisions of 3.6. There is one exception: It does *not* benefit from the Forage Rule. This special unit can now Cooperate (3.7a) with all Allied troops.

3.9 There are some differences between road-building and airbase construction to bear in mind. A) It costs 2T (not 1 SP) to improve a hex of the Ledo Road. B) Road construction requires an engineer with "road" on the counter, and both it and any supporting engineers must be stationary and in the actual hex.

Engineers working on a road hex must be stationary and in Combat Mode. Note that it is possible to build more than one Ledo hex in a Movement Phase, as long as each is connected to an existing All-Weather Road (maybe extended earlier in the phase) when the construction attempt is made.

Sudden Death Victory. It is impossible to fulfill the Mandalay condition without the optional truck units (4.5). It is also virtually impossible to complete the Ledo Road in the game's time frame.

To clarify the campaign victory conditions, the Ledo Road's goal is to connect with the all-weather road near Bhamo; building the road so it exits east somewhere like A62.18 or A62.22 does *not* result in Allied victory.

Replacement Chart. Allied HQ units cannot be rebuilt.

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## HUBE'S POCKET House Rules

### Railroad Changes

There should be a single-track RR running north from Beridchev through Zhitomir and off the north map edge following the course of the road.

There should be a single-track RR running southeast from Zhitomir through Andrushev to Popelyna following the course of the road.

The RR running NE from Shepetovka becomes a Soviet trace supply source starting 15 February.

*Dean's Grade: Damned if I know. (:->)*

### Terrain Effects Changes

During Light Thaw and Thaw turns the Truck cost of Open hexes is increased to 2 MP.

*Dean's Grade: C*

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## KOREA House Rules

### TEC Changes

To make the terrain more rugged, change the following movement costs:

"Open" now costs Trucks 2.

"Low Hills" now costs Track 2.

"Hills" now costs Leg 2.

*John's Comment: This works well with the June start, but hasn't been checked with the various mid-war scenarios. In those, players might want to allow some "wobble room" on setups for units that would start out of throw range due to this change.*

OCS House Rule 4.5a, which changes port-handling in enemy ZOC, works well in this game.

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## CB & GBII Clarifications

1.8a Where a RR connection is needed, the ability to use rail cap must exist (with respect to enemy ZOC). Note a slight exception regarding Stalingrad: the RR connection only needs to reach Sloboda.

3.2 Landings are made during the Soviet Movement Phase, with no advanced planning needed. The landing hex (or hexes) can be of any terrain. There is no ALT roll; success is automatic. Combat units are landed in Combat or Move Mode; SP are just placed in the hex even if there is no port. There is no movement after landing.

### 19 Nov 1942 Campaigns

The Soviets have 2 massive assaults available, but the one used on the first turn *does* count against this total.

### New Order of Arrival Notes:

1. Withdrawn air units should be full-strength (if possible). Players should not intentionally create breakdown rgts before a division is withdrawn — be honorable! The only time a Dead Pile unit can be used is when it is the exact unit called for.
2. For classes of units you are treating as “generic” (not worrying about designations) to speed setup, withdrawals should all be full-strength (if possible).

## CB & GBII House Rules

### Soviet Replacements

On turns when one or more Pax are received on the Repl Table, the first one must be used to rebuild a full-strength division from the Dead Pile of AR 2 or less. (Pick randomly from the pool of destroyed divisions.) The cost for the full division is just 1 Pax. Only one such discount per turn is allowed.

*Dean's Grade: B*

### Weather (Ground Conditions)

Ground conditions can only improve by one level per turn (so Deep Mud can never jump directly to Dry).

*Dean's Grade: C*

### Weather (Flight Conditions)

Allow no hip shoots during Limited Flight turns.

*Dean's Grade: A*

### Reinforcement Placement

Modify 1.8b so that Sal'sk, Elista, and Frovlovo are limited to no more than 6 RE of reinforcements (units and SPs) arriving per turn. Furthermore, this maximum is reduced by 1 RE for each adjacent hex occupied by German combat units. (Note that supply source status isn't affected.)

*John's Comment: A solution to the potential problem of Soviets suddenly appearing in a location that is under siege.*

### South Edge

Add the 6.1 special rule on Soviet supply sources to the standard rules for their supply.

*Dean's Grade: This will be in the new version of GBII.*