

10-27-14. Welcome to a new Forward Observer. Check out the archives for older posts. Now, on with the observations. I am adding the Czech 4th Army. Look for more of indigineous Czech built equipment along with Polish and Hungarian vehicles that the Czech Peoples Army utilized. Two engineering vehicles I added are the MU-90 (Czech minelayer similar to the Soviet GMZ) and the SVO MICLEIC. The MU-90 has the same characteristics as the GMZ, while the SVO carries 4 MICLEIC charges. You will also find the Czech BPzV. This is the Czech FIST. More OT-90s, OT-64s and PSzH-4s to come. Enjoy!

10-28-14. Forgot to mention it yesterday, but you will also find the Czech Vz.85 ShM-120 PRAM-S (PRAM). This is a 120mm automatic mortar mounted on a BVP chasis. It has a range out to 32 hexes. It has a rate of fire of 40 rounds in 5 minutes. Ammunition load is 80 He, Smoke and Illum rounds with 21 rounds carried in the autoloader. It also comes equipped with the AT-5 Spandrel. Definitely a well rounded vehicle.

Glad to see the international interest in Assault. I want to say Thanks to the fans in Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, France, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, and Singapore. ENJOY!

10-29-14. Completed the Czech 4th Army. Probably time to get back to NATO and work some more on the French, Spanish and Italians. Please like us on Facebook; leave comments and observations. ENJOY!

10-30-14. Started work on the French Army. I am going to be publishing the French 1st Army. I have gotten the 1st Corps assets and 1st Armor Division up. I actually have done the 7th Division but I still have to complete the unit insignia art. That is no mistake in the 1st Armor Division (FR). There are 70 tanks in 2 armor regiments. Other French armor regiments only had 54 tanks. You won't find the CAESAR 155mm wheeled SPG yet but it will be up shortly. It was developed in the early 90s and the first orders were made in 2000. Another program delayed by the "peace" dividend. I should have the 7th Division up by the 31st, in the meantime; ENJOY!

11-2-14. Just a little word on the AML and the ERC-90. Corrected the armor values. They are correct now. The AML was upgraded and the ERC-90, which had been overrated is now reduced. They should a more accurate representation of the vehicles actual performance. I added the French 12th division. Being a light armor division, it seemed the logical place to place the CAESAR SPG. This 155mm weapon system was in development in the early 90s and a demonstrator was built in 1994. The French waited until 2000 before placing orders, but it could have been available if the cold war had continued so ...here it is. ENJOY!!

11-3-14. The French 1st Corps is complete. I think the 12th and 14th DLBs will be interesting divisions to run through some simulations. All French AEVs have a 142mm demolition gun similar to the British gun. I have updated the French Direct Fire Chart 4 to reflect this. I may add a British 105mm armed Centurion AVRE to the UK forces. I know they had 3 or 4 in Desert Storm. Though the Centurion is slow even by British standards, it is a unique weapon system. May take a day to decide where to go next. Thinking about the Spanish. One division is not enough so I will probably model a Spanish corps equivilent unit. Then I will

finish up the Italians and probably head back to the Pact to finish out the Hungarians, Poles, Russians and Czechs. ENJOY!

11-4-14. Just a quick word and I promise more later on the Leopard 2 upgrades. The Spanish Leopard 2E is out with the Spanish 3rd Mech Division. Yes, the Leopard 2E is more powerful than the Bundeswehr Leopard 2A5 and 2A6. More on that later. For all you in the U.S., GO VOTE!

Okay, more on the Spanish and the Leopard.

11-5-14. Okay, the story of the Leopard 2E and Leopard 2A5/6. This is what I have come up with from the widespread and various tales of development. In 1989, the Spanish decided they wanted a better tank than the AMX-30E and the M48A5/M47E2. So they embarked on a massive restructuring and upgrade program. Then 1990 came along with the East Bloc implosion. The Spanish, however, forged ahead, determined to create a fine military program. They selected the Leopard 2 with some modifications. Since the Germans were nearing completion and deployment of the Leopard 2A5 in 1993, they gave the Spanish 108 Leopard 2A4s as a loaner until the Leopard 2A5s were done. The Spanish took the 2A4s but what they had in mind for the 2E was a much more enhanced system. So, the Spanish contracted for the Leopard 2E in 1995ish, with potential delivery in 1998. The 2E was to be equipped with the 2A5 extra armor but not as an add on but as a fully integrated system. The 2E was to have the new 120mm 55 calibre cannon (featured on the 2A6) and a CITV fire control system. So at the end of the 1990s, the Spanish were poised to put the a very powerful, well protected armored vehicle on the battlefield. Then the merger monster stepped in. General Dynamics began an acquisition process to purchase the Spanish contractor responsible for building the Leopard 2E, SBS. So another 3-4 year delay and finally in 2003-4 the 200+ Leopard 2Es began rolling off the assembly line. The Germans, in the meantime, pushed out the 2A5s to the armor battalions by 1998 and were in the process of tooling up for the 2A6s. SO, the way I see it, both the 2E and 2A5/6 Leopards were available for production in the 1990s and probably would have been produced sooner if not for the implosion of the Warsaw Pact. THAT is why you will see the introduction of the Leopard 2E and upgrading of some German units to 2A5/2A6. Honestly, I wished I had put a little more thought into the Bundeswehr before starting this project. I am satisfied with what we have published so far and I hope you will enjoy the units to come. ENJOY!!

11-9-14. More Italians. I will complete the Italian V Corps over the next few days. Enjoy!!

11-10-14. The Italian V Corps is the meat and potatoes of the Italian Army. While the III Corps functioned as a reserve, the V Corps was the heavy corps that was to engage the Warsaw Pact on the eastern Italian frontier. You will find the LVTP-7A1 making its' first appearance with the Amphibious Vehicles Battalion. I don't think that I am really happy with the silhouette on that and I will keep tweeking it til I find it. Two of the Armor Brigades are equipped with the C-1 Ariete; the third armor brigade has the M-60A3. The references I have list the Pozzuolo di Friuli Armored Brigade as being equipped with something called Tank Squadron Groups and Mechanized Squadron Groups. All the equipment listings for these formations indicate that they are tank and mechanized infantry battalions, respectively, and not the combined arms Armored Battalion formations. ENJOY!

11-11-14. HAPPY VETERAN'S DAY! Thank you to all my brother veterans and Cold War Warriors. If you know a vet take time to thank them for their service; it was something that we did not have to do but chose to do for others. The Italian V Corps is completed. A word about

those Defense Battalions. All my research indicates that these units would fight in fixed locations with prepared fortifications. It appears that these units were not maneuver units but were intended to be considered "roadblocks and hedgehogs". As such, these units should start a scenario in whatever type entrenchment or bunker the player desires. Next, I am going to detour into the Arctic and publish the Norwegian Army. I have almost completed the Brigade Nord and am finishing up the Norwegian Fire charts. So, I guess that means I will be adding the Soviet Leningrad front and probably the USMC. In the meantime, ENJOY!!

11-12-14. I have added the Norwegian Army to the NATO armies. PLEASE read the Norwegian Units and Capabilities page as there are some interesting capabilities attributed to some of the new Norwegian units. The Norwegians were in transition when the Warsaw Pact collapsed. They were re-organizing into Brigade 90 and 78 formations. In the 2000s they moved to a more streamlined organization. I used all three types, with the newest version for the CV-90/Leopard 2A5 battalions. Look for more Norwegian units and probably the Soviet Leningrad front to make an appearance as both sides gear up for battle in the Finnmark. More Norwegians with the 17th Brigade Finnmark Land Defense. I did not have much information on the makeup of these units, so I constructed them as I think they might have looked with the direction that the Norwegian defense strategy seemed to be moving. The artillery units are directly subordinate to the Defense Area commands. The Brigade Nord is still the major combat unit in the area but these Defense Area Commands are useful in their own right. ENJOY!!

11-13-14. Okay, enough Norwegian units have rolled off the line to be more than a speed bump to the Arctic Bear. The German re-armament is in full swing as Leopard 2A5s are in full deployment in German III Corps and the 2A6s are beginning production. I like that 2A6 55 calibre main gun. Looks like it's time to head east and whip the Soviets back into shape. ENJOY!!

11-14-14. Add the German 1st PzG Brigade to the list of upgraded units.

11-18-14. I have begun adding the elements of the Soviet far north units. First up is the Leningrad Military District. I am calling this the Leningrad Front as the wartime designation. In addition to the front units, you will also find the Soviet 6th Combined Arms Army, the Vyborg Corps and the Arkangel Corps. Look for the MTLB to become the primary APC since its wide tracks and relatively light weight give good cross country speed in the far north. Hope to have most of the LF completed by Thanksgiving. Then probably some USMC to help out the Norwegians. ENJOY!!

11-20-14. Working on adding more Soviets to the Leningrad Front. Look for the Soviet Naval Brigade soon along with Naval Transport. ENJOY!!

11-24-14. Work continues on the Leningrad Front. Look for additions to the Soviet Direct Fire Chart 3. You will find the 2B9 and the soon to come to the Soviet arsenal, the BRDM-2 w/ AT-3M. I am trying to determine whether or not to put the PT-76 in the 36th Guards Naval Brigade. The Russians modified the PT-76, resulting in the PT-76E. The PT-76E did not enter service until 2006, however. Could it have been developed in the 1990s? Absolutely. The PT-76E uses a modified 57mm S-60 that can penetrate 100 mm of armor at 1120 meters and engage aircraft out to 6000 meters. There were modifications to the fire control system and installation of the engine and transmission from the BMP-1. I have the counter and data available. So we will see if it makes it into the arsenal.

11-25-14. The Soviet 36th Naval Infantry Brigade is up along with the additional direct fire data in the Soviet Direct Fire Data Chart 3 and upgrade of the Rule 43: Naval Assault. I went with the PT-76E in the armor battalion and the PT-76B in the reconnaissance unit. I read an interesting article that says the Russians intend to upgrade their Naval Infantry Brigades with T-90As and BMP-3s by 2015. I think what we've published is a good model of what a Soviet Naval Infantry Brigade would have looked like in 1995-1999. I have also included Soviet Ropucha and Zubr naval vessels. The Zubrs are LCAC (hovercraft) and look like they will add some interesting tactical problems to any amphibious scenario. Well I am off to work on some Cat C divisions for the Vyborg and Arkanglsk Corps and the Air Assault Brigade for the Leningrad Front. ENJOY!!

12-1-14. The Soviet Vyborg Corps is available for deployment. Look for the MTLB anti-tank missile carrier 9P149 carrying AT6B Spiral missiles in the anti-tank units. The Vyborg Corps consists of Category C Guards motor-rifle divisions. You will find T-62Ms, BTR-60s, MTLBs and D30 howitzers. There is also older model Mi-24As and Mi-8Cs. Normally, the Soviets have Army level commands but I am finding in lower readiness units there are more Corps level commands. The nearest I can determine is that these Corps commands in addition to lower readiness, have less support assets. The Arkanglsk Corps will be next up; look for even lower readiness and older equipment. Under development for near future publication, is the Ivan Rogov Class LSD ships. Along with the LSD you will also find the Kamov Ka-29 Helix assault helicopter. Hopefully I will have the Arkanglsk Corps and Naval units up by 12-7-14. In the meantime.....ENJOY!!

12-3-14. The Soviet Naval Assault Ships are now available. You will find the Ivan Rogov class ship with its complement of Ka-29 Helix assault helicopters on board. I haven't tried this yet but the old Panzerleader coastal map boards maybe an alternative to coastal Assault maps. Just a thought. I may give them a try this weekend just to see how they would work. Any ideas, thoughts or comments? Let me know via e-mail or at our Facebook page.

12-5-14. I have updated the Rule 43: Naval Assault, to account for the newly added Soviet Ivan Rogov Class LSD and the Ka-29. When the USMC units begin appearing along with the USN transports, look for more changes and expansion. You will see U.S. Harriers, Sea Knights and Osprey's. Right now, I am just incorporating the assault ships into the mix but I am thinking at some point I may need to provide for shore bombardment. Amphibious operations may spawn another website introducing naval warfare. I do not know. There is so much left to do with the ground forces and NATO proper that battle may be left for another day. I am getting some very good emails from some of you out there on what you would like to see. I definitely want to expand into the southern flank. That will bring in Greece, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Austria, and Yugoslavia (whether prior to the breakup or post breakup with the many factions). *** I have also updated the Charts and Tables page and there are NEW ADDITIONS TO RULE 38: Close Air Support that significantly change the attack strategy of Aircraft. Specifically, aircraft ROF for a weapons system is the available ammunition supply. An aircraft can drop all its bombs, or fire all rounds of a specific ordinance in a single combat run and in the case of the GBU's this may indeed be desirable when a high priority target such as a ship or high level HQ presents itself. When using a conventional type attack factor such as for a GBU, the factors for each may be combined into one one attack. For instance, a NATO Fighter-Bomber attacking with 4 GBU's, factor 50 each, may decide to attack a hex with 2 of the GBU's for a combined factor of 100. In the meantime, ENJOY!!

12-8-14. Attended a Pearl Harbor Day function. Completed the Arkangel Corps and added some combat assets to the Vyborg Corps. I think I am going to add some USMC before tackling the Baltic Front, though there are some Southern Front Pact divisions I need to finish. ENJOY!!

12-10-14. Going back and finishing up the Southern Group of Forces. I finished up the Soviet 9th Guards CAA. I will get the Hungarians completed this week. On a side note, I am working on the USMC commitment to AFNORTH (i.e. Norway); more naval rules for the U.S. units; LPDs and LHAs on the way. ENJOY!!