

BYELORUSSIAN BATTLEFIELDS

All *Flames Of War* battles need terrain! Battles in the Second World War were rarely fought over open plains with unobstructed lines of sight. In *Flames Of War*, wide open tables are extremely boring to play because they inevitably turn into dull shooting matches. Adding just a little terrain will give your game all sorts of flavour as your troops manoeuvre across the table!

FIRESTORM AREAS

The area types on the *Firestorm* campaign map help suggest how to set up your battlefield, but you are by no means limited by that suggestion when setting up your board. For example, a battle in an area with hills might mean that you place a few more hills than you would normally have on your table.

PLACING TERRAIN

You don't need lots of terrain to make your table an exciting battlefield! Covering about a third of your board with terrain

is usually enough to fight a *Flames Of War* battle. When placing terrain, group similar pieces together, such as trees or buildings. This helps the landscape look more natural. Make your terrain the focus of your battles by placing pieces, such as villages or hills, at key locations on the table. Terrain should be something to fight over, not something to avoid!

Also try using the same table setup to play different missions. Each separate mission will play differently on the same table. For example, playing an Encounter mission on a river table will pose a completely different set of challenges than playing a No Retreat mission on the same table.

Always discuss the terrain with your opponent and agree on how to treat each feature before the game. Most of all, have fun and experiment with your terrain!

WOODS

A common misconception about wooded tables is that they must be crowded wall-to-wall with trees. However, that just would not be fun to play on. Place woods to give both players a challenge, but not so as they close off parts of the table. With a little thought, even a small amount of wooded terrain has a significant impact on the table, while still being fun to play on.

TERRAIN IDEAS

1 WOODS & FORESTS

Woods are usually large areas of terrain. They provide Concealment to all teams hiding within and are rated as Difficult Going.

In forests the vegetation is much thicker, making travelling through forests Very Difficult Going for vehicles!

Both woods and forests are suitable for *Firestorm* Forest areas, although woods should probably outnumber forests. Clump your woods and forests together to make a large area worth fighting over. Model the trees fairly open (or make them moveable on the base) to make it easier to move your miniatures through them!

2 STANDING CROPS

Standing crops are usually large areas of terrain. They are typically tall enough to provide Concealment to infantry, guns and jeeps, but will leave a tank exposed. Give standing crops a reason for being there by placing them close to rivers and villages.

3 ROADS

Roads provide a quick route from one place to another. Trucks and half-tracks travelling along a road move much faster than they do cross-country. Even tanks benefit from roads since they often offer paths through difficult terrain.

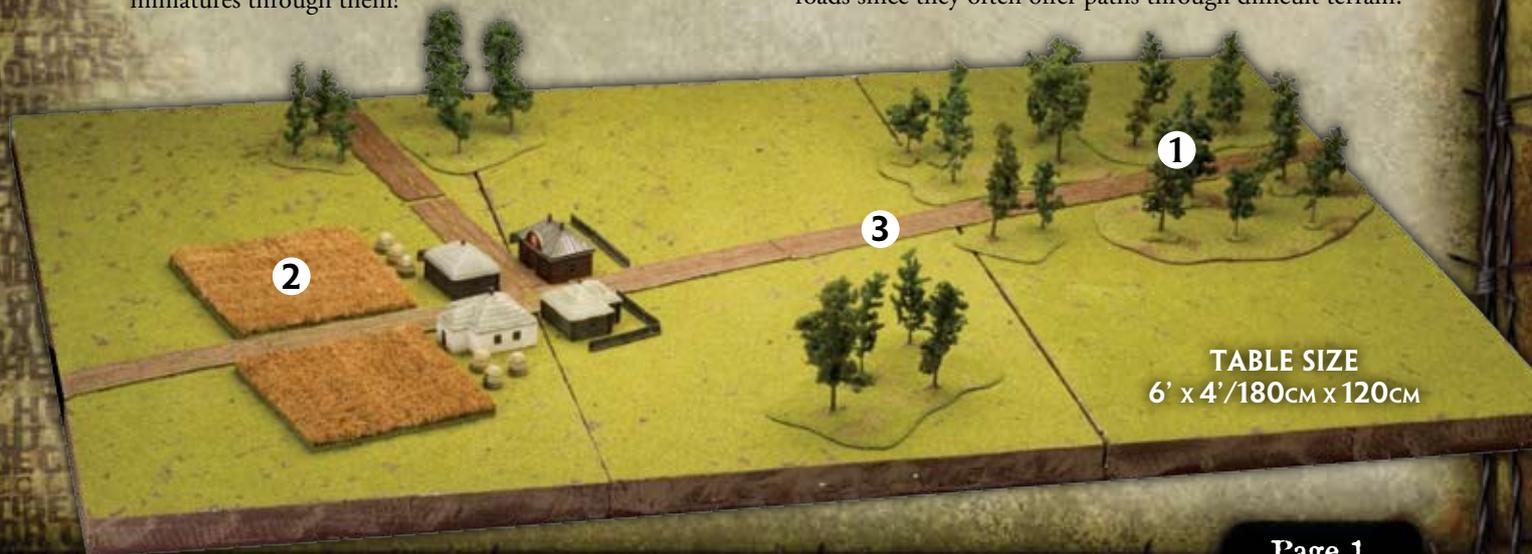


TABLE SIZE
6' x 4'/180CM x 120CM

MARSH & SWAMP TABLES

A large number of Soviet breakthroughs during Operation Bagration were made through wooded swamps and marshes. The German Army was simply not expecting large assaults through such inhospitable terrain! Marsh tables do not need to be open. By adding a little more cover such as trees and fields the table will produce more exciting action!

TERRAIN IDEAS

1 MARSHES & SWAMPS

Large areas of marshes look imposing on the table, but are not that scary. Marshes are rated as Difficult Going, so tanks can travel through them slowly with only a slight chance of bogging down.

Swamps, on the other hand, are quite nasty places for tanks! The wet mud and mires makes swamps Very Difficult Going.

In your games, use marshes to your advantage by setting up your infantry on their edge, so that any tank that decides to assault them will have to risk bogging down when they assault!

When setting up your table, both marshes and swamps are appropriate for the marsh areas on the Firestorm campaign map. Decide with your opponent which (or both) you will use before the game begins!

2 STREAMS AND CREEKS

Drainage streams and small creeks connect marsh and swamp patches together. Streams are typically rather large and rated Very Difficult Going while Creeks are much smaller and treated as Difficult Going.

3 VILLAGES

Villages are often built near marshes so that the inhabitants could cut peat for heating their homes during the cold winters. When placing your village, keep the buildings close together. For example, an infantry platoon should remain within command distance if occupying all of the buildings in a village.

4 WOODS

As with the forest table, clump your forests or woods together to form large areas to fight over and through, and to give areas to manoeuvre behind. On this table the woods provide a nice balance to the large area of swamp at the other end of the table.



HILL TABLES

As with wooded tables, hill tables are not required to have hills from one end of the table to the other. A hill table could simply have a couple more hills than your typical table. When modelling hills remember WYSIWYG, What You See Is What You Get, so treat each hill exactly as it is modelled! Experiment with more terrain to see how adding an extra field, hill or woods will affect the outcome of the game!

TERRAIN IDEAS

HILLS

Hills vary greatly in height and difficulty to cross, so like most other terrain, it pays to define your hills with your opponent before the start of each game.

Hills provide excellent cover for your army to manoeuvre behind. Your anti-tank guns and machine-guns will have a better view of the advancing enemy from the top of a hill!

1 GENTLE HILLS

Gentle hills should be modelled just high enough to conceal tanks positioned on the far side. Their long, gradual slopes make them Cross-country terrain.

2 ROLLING HILLS

Rolling hills are a bit more dramatic, and are rated Difficult Going. These hills should be made tall enough to block line of sight to troops positioned on the far side.

3 STEEP HILLS

Steep hills are formidable obstacles and are Very Difficult Going. As you would expect, these hills are tall enough to also block line of sight to troops positioned on the far side.

4 CLIFFS

Cliffs are forbidding features on the battlefield. They are Impassable to all teams except troops with the Mountaineer special rule.

5 VALLEYS

The spaces between your hills are just as important. Valleys are dangerous fire alleys that players must advance through if they are worried about their tanks bogging down on steep hills. Place your anti-tank guns and assault guns to take advantage of these fire alleys and disrupt your enemy's plan!



TABLE SIZE
6' x 4' / 180cm x 120cm



CITIES, VILLAGES AND FARMSTEADS

You could represent city fights in your *Firestorm* games using a village like the one shown in the picture below. You can also play on a table with several larger industrial buildings along with the other smaller buildings. You can even play a game using the city's defences on a table with no buildings at all, representing the fight over the defences on the outskirts of a town. Villages and farmsteads were very common throughout Byelorussia and can appear in any sort of terrain.

TERRAIN IDEAS

1 VILLAGES

When setting up your villages, make sure that your buildings are close together. We recommend spacing buildings no further apart than the width of a large artillery base. This allows guns and large tanks to move between the buildings, while still allowing platoons to deploy into multiple houses and remain in command distance.

Villages are typically groups of buildings consisting of between three to eight buildings and surrounding fences, vegetable gardens, and fields.

Haystacks are a prominent feature in the small Byelorussian agricultural villages, especially during the late summer months of July and August. In your games use haystacks to conceal your troops and spring ambushes from them!

CITIES

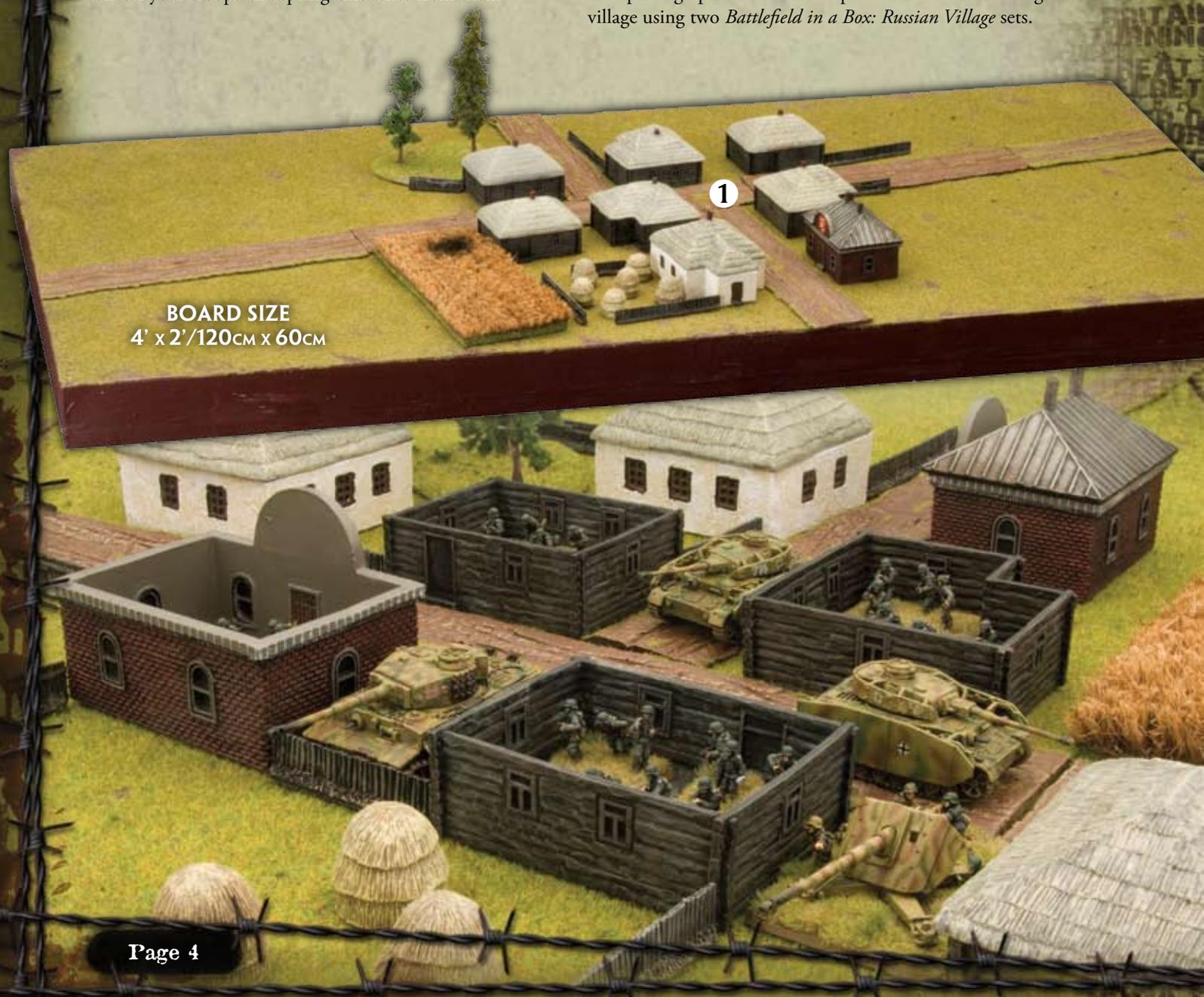
Larger collections of buildings, such as towns and cities, are a bit more difficult to create. Adding a few more terrain pieces, such as paved roads, railroad depots and small factories helps turn a village into a proper town or city.

ADDITIONS

Also consider other terrain for your village. Settlements usually appear around major landmarks such as bridges and major road or rail intersections. Add extra terrain such as fields, streams and haystacks to give your village a reason for being there. Always remember to focus your terrain so that it is something worth fighting over!

The photograph below shows part of a table featuring a village using two *Battlefield in a Box: Russian Village* sets.

BOARD SIZE
4' X 2'/120CM X 60CM



RIVERS

From large rivers such as the Dnepr and the Dvina to small ones that barely warrant a name on a map, rivers dominated the lowland areas of the Byelorussian Front. Whatever the size, both the Germans and Soviets used these formidable obstacles as natural fortifications because the crossings provided ideal choke points to stem the enemy advance.

TERRAIN IDEAS

1 RIVERS

Rivers were a significant obstacle in Byelorussia. Remember that in *Flames Of War*, a river approximately 4"/10cm to 6"/15cm wide, uses the River Crossing rules (see pages 66 and 67). You'll want to place several crossing points to help your armies get across!

Rivers often run through forests and woods. Place woods on both sides of a river. This adds another dimension to river crossings with players using as much cover as possible. Rivers also have many bushes and light woods packed against the river bank. Adding low-lying scrub and bushes to your river banks will give troops concealment as they approach the river.

Rivers also cut through hills, creating a few cliffs and steep hill faces. You may wish to add some hills or cliff faces along your river.

2 NEARBY SETTLEMENTS

Bridges were key landmarks in the Byelorussian landscape. Wherever there are bridges or fords over a river, there is likely a settlement nearby. The size of the settlement depended largely on the significance of the river crossing. For example, a settlement near a crossing over the Dnepr would be much larger than another by the ford of a smaller river. The river could even run through the middle of your village.

You are likely to find the village's crops near the river as well. You could place some crops near the river and treat them as Difficult Going to represent the boggy ground.

TABLE SIZE
6' x 4' / 180CM x 120CM



