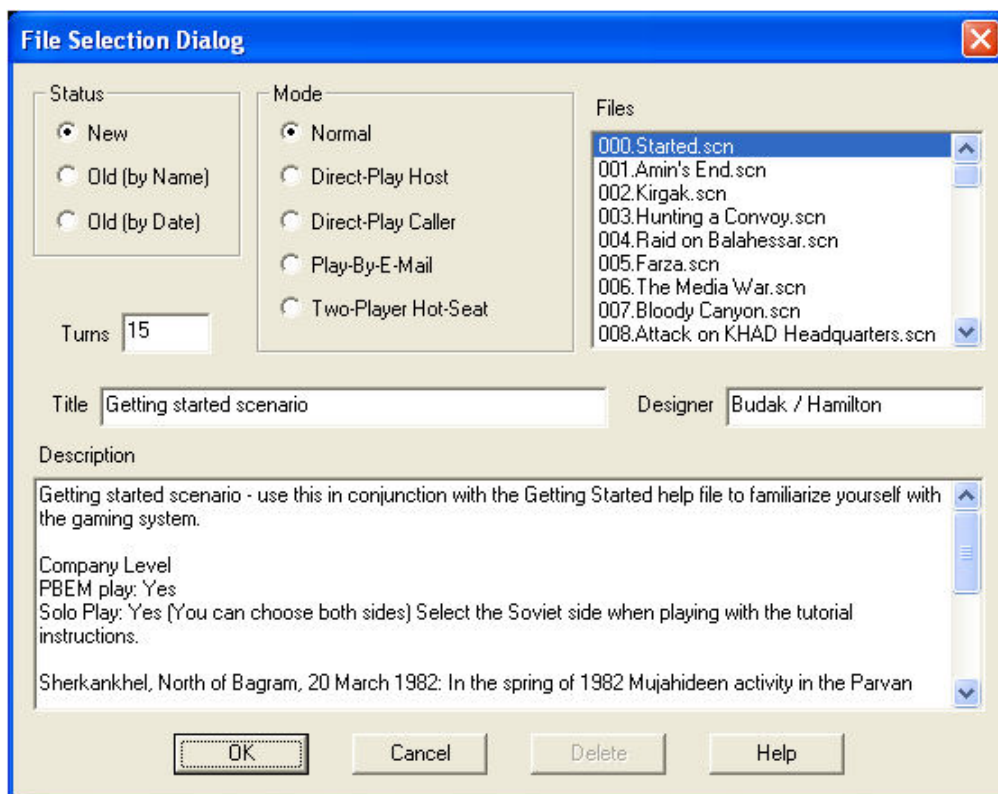


Getting started tutorial for Soviet-Afghan War

Welcome to the latest edition to the Squad Battles series of games, Soviet-Afghan War (SAW). This title will take you into a little known or explored conflict where a super power fought and lost over a ten-year period to the Mujahideen guerilla forces. This file contains instructions on how to get started with SAW.

If it is not already running, you should run the Main Program by clicking on the Main Program entry in the HPS Soviet-Afghan War program group (The HPS Soviet-Afghan War program group can be found under the Programs list from the Start button). You must keep the game disk in the CD drive it was installed from while playing the game. If you prefer, you can print these instructions using the Print button above. You will get about 11 pages of text and graphics if you do this. Note: the SAW software is designed to run on displays with screen areas up to 1280 by 1024 pixels and with color settings of 16-bit or higher.

The first battle in the list in the window on the right is "000.Started.scn" This is going to be your tutorial scenario. If you are new to the series you will want to read these instructions as you fight this battle for a basic understanding of just how this game works.



In the bottom center of this same screen is a window that gives you information on the scenarios in the game. It gives you the approximate size of the forces involved and the time frame of the battle. The text even gives you some hints on what you are to do and usually the historical or hypothetical background of the battle. Take the time to read the information about this battle. You will be much better prepared to enter this small firefight and win it.

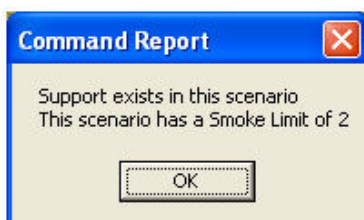
After reading the information we now know that we are taking the role of the Soviet forces fighting against the Mujahideen in the Parvan province. The mission of this scenario is to destroy all Mujahideen units and seize control of the town of Sherkhankhel.

Once you hit the enter key or click on "OK", you'll see another menu of choices. This is the AI Selection Dialog. In this menu you'll pick which side you will be controlling. So choose "Manual" for the Soviet AI which means you will be controlling the Soviet side. Next, click either on "Automatic" or "Automatic with FOW" for the Mujahideen side. Now the computer will control the Mujahideen troops. "FOW" means fog of war. If you choose it, you won't be able to see any enemy units until they come within the line of sight (LOS) of one or more of your units. Playing with FOW turned on makes the battle much more realistic and exciting as surprise and LOS are key elements of small unit actions. If you are, however, a first time player, it will be easier to play in "Automatic" without the Fog of War.



Notice the word "Rules" at the bottom of the Menu. Clicking on it will allow you to turn on or off other optional things in the game. We'll leave that alone for this time, but when starting future battles you can go in and select the optional rules that you desire. For more details on each rule click the "Help" button on that screen. After you have picked the method of play in the AI Selection Dialog Menu, click on "OK".

Since you are playing the Soviets you will be in control for the first turn. That may not always be the case, as sometimes the AI player will go first. A box will appear designating which army has the turn, this box will appear at the beginning of each turn through out the game. You can either left-click on it to make it go away, and then repeat that each time, or you can right-click on it and it will display briefly then automatically go away each turn for the remainder of your session.



A dialog box appears over the map which states "Support Exists in this scenario" and "This scenario has a smoke Limit of 2". Click the OK box to acknowledge this message. We'll come back to these items after we cover some of the basics.

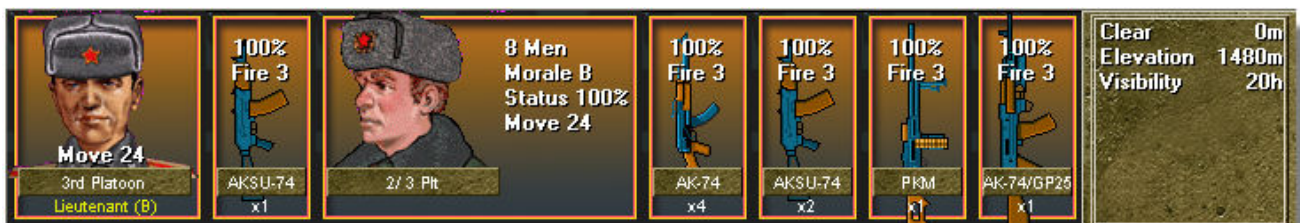
Now you see the battlefield and your troops. If you wish to scroll around the map with ease, click on the menu list at the top called "Settings" Then click on "auto scroll" unless it already has a check mark. Now you can simply run your mouse pointer to any corner of the map and the screen will move until the edge of the map is reached.

Your forces will be in view at the bottom of the map, coming up two separate roads. If you scroll upwards you will see the town area in between the trees and the objective hexes, the little boxes with numbers in them. These, along with eliminating the enemy are what you need to win the battle. Those numbers are the points you earn when you capture them. Right now they belong to the Mujahideen. If you want more information on objectives, strength or victory status, click on the "Info" menu at the top of the screen.



Notice also that you can zoom in or out on the map with the keys "1" (2D Zoom Out) or "2" (2D Zoom In). Using the Zoom Out option lets us survey the map quicker and get that big picture. This allows you to be more aware of potential dangers and opportunities. You may also use the "+" and "-" buttons on the tool bar, or make your selection from the "View" menu.

Take a careful look at your forces. Left click on any stack of units and then look at the bottom of the screen. I chose the stack on hex 11,32 (you can find your hex numbers in the bottom right hand corner of the screen), and I see that within that hex I have a Lieutenant of 3rd Platoon armed with an AKSU-74 assault rifle and the 2nd squad of 3rd platoon armed with a variety of weapons.



Using this simple procedure you can see information, weapons, status and a lot more on every one of your units. Right-clicking on the Information bar reveals other information about your men and especially their weapons such as:

Reliability (Rel): Ranging from A (best) to F (worst)

Range (Rng): Just how far the weapon will reach in hexes

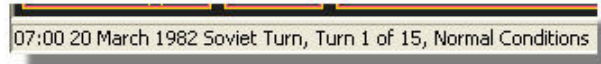
Lethality (Leth): The effectiveness of the weapon

Penetration (Pen): This refers to the weapon's ability to penetrate an enemy's protection

The hex info area to the right of your units displays the type of terrain your unit is currently in, the elevation and the visibility range currently active in the scenario. When the bar is right-clicked this info also changes, with the number displayed in the center being the total number of men stacked in the hex along with any special terrain features that might be present, and in this case we see there is also a "Secondary Road" running through the hex along with the hex sides it enters and exits from.



Also notice that at the bottom of the screen other pertinent information, such as the date and time of day, number of turns and weather conditions are given to you. Knowing more about what is going on, what your men can and cannot do, and the terrain you are in can be a big help to you in planning your tactics. If an error occurs during play, for example you try and give a unit a command it is not allowed to execute, then error messages will also display in this lower bar.



In order to have proper tactics, you must know what your goals are. What are you trying to do here? Victory depends on a point ratio. Points are acquired or lost in three ways. The first one is capturing the objectives on the map. Doing so gives you points. There are other types of objectives, such as an "exit" objective. You get extra points if you move your forces to those hexes and then remove them from the map with the Command Menu at the top. In other scenarios, some objectives will be of the "Capture" type. Once you have taken them, the opponent cannot retake them.

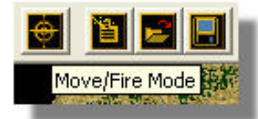
There are four objectives to be taken and held in this scenario. They are in hexes 8,8 - 10,10 - 13,7 and 16,8. Whoever controls them (the last one to move into the hex) at the end of the game will get the point value of the objective. Thus it can change hands every turn but the final count comes at the end of the battle. You can take and then lose it sometimes shifting from one victory level to another in a single turn. Victory conditions are usually tight in the Squad Battles games, so each and every piece of real estate is very valuable.

The next way to get points is by destroying the enemy. You add to your final score for each enemy eliminated. They can often add up to more than the objective points. This means that you must create casualties on the other side in sufficient numbers to help you to get the points you need. And finally, you win by avoiding excessive losses. Remember the points for casualties work both ways. The computer or other human player will get points for losses that you suffer. Thus it is very important that you try to preserve your force while taking out the enemy. If you remain aware of these three factors you will have a better game with a better final score. Treat your force like they are real men under your command...don't send them on suicidal charges and you will stand a better chance of keeping your losses low!

In this game there are a series of what are called Hot Keys. These are keys that you can press during the game that will allow you to facilitate many of the features included. It is just another great feature of the Squad Battle games to make things so much easier for you. Practice using them and you'll find that they will soon become second nature to you. A complete list of these keys can be found in the Main Program Help File.

With this information it is time to go into action. Much of what I am going to mention now is already thoroughly covered in the User's Manual, but I'll help you out a bit here so the play can continue. The logical thing to do is to move toward the objective and take it as quickly as possible, hopefully before the enemy does.

But how do you move a unit? There are two ways. First make sure the button (with the cross hairs) at the top far left is not depressed. You depress it to fire. Go ahead. Try it. Now un-depress it so that you can move and not waste shots firing into thin air. You may also toggle to and from fire mode by pressing and holding the "Ctrl" key, if you just want to fire one unit and then go on to move others.



Remember that each unit is always either in "fire" mode or "move" mode. Right now we want to move. You can do that in two ways. You can highlight the unit (double clicking on it) or units in a hex, then right click in an adjacent hex. The highlighted unit(s) will move there. You can keep doing that until your unit runs out of movement points (MP). The other way is to highlight the units in the hex and then while holding down the left mouse key, go to the desired hex and release the key (Drag-and-drop).



Try it. You can do it both ways in one turn if you have enough MP and the terrain allows for it. Look for the unit in hex 9,30. That would be a fire team from 3rd platoon. We are going to move them. Highlight the unit by double clicking with the left mouse key on the hex. Notice how it lights up at the bottom of the screen. Now right click on hex 9,29 (next hex up from where your units are). Remember you can left click on any hex and nothing will happen. Doing that will help you find hex 9,29. If you do that, however, you'll have to go back to 9,30 and highlight the unit again.

Okay, with the unit highlighted, simply right click on hex 9,29. Notice that the arrow appears behind the unit so you see where you have moved from and your direction.

Let's move again, this time using the second method. Double click on the unit in hex 9,29. This time hold down the left mouse key after the second click. Now move your mouse over hex 6,27 and release the key. Your units will move into the hex. You'll want to move along the roads so you expend the least amount of movement points possible for each hex moved...but be careful, you really have no idea what is ahead of you and Mujahideen forces could open up on you at any time. Keeping scouting elements in front of your force (on point) at all times is a very good tactic for keeping your casualties down.

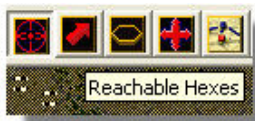
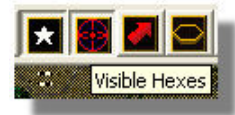




One element that is vital to your success is your leaders. The Lieutenant at hex 11,32 is a leader. He has special qualities. His purpose is to keep the men in good order during combat. Do not risk your leaders by putting them too far up front. Place them instead in positions of less danger but readily available to aid the men. For example, this Lieutenant is stacked with the 2nd squad. Should it be fired upon and become "pinned" or "demoralized," it will be his responsibility to rally those troops. Without the presence in the hex of a leader, rallying troops is more difficult and takes much longer.

As you move about, remember that you have a number of handy helps represented by the icons at the top of the map. If you prefer using the menus, they are also readily available at the top of the screen. Let's mention two of them before you move more of your men. To check the LOS (Line of Sight) of a unit, start by selecting (with a double click of the mouse) a hex with units. Let's pick hex 6,27, which contains the lead fire team. Now from the toolbar click on the Visible Hexes button or use the hotkey "S."

When you press this button, the hexes that can be seen by the highlighted units are brighter against the darker background. As you can see the visibility will extend up the road and the surrounding ground, except where the terrain blocks LOS.



Now if you select from the toolbar the Reachable Hexes button or the hotkey "C", you will be shown the hexes to which this selected unit will be able to move. The shaded portions of the map are out of the range of this unit this turn. You have enough MP to move two more hexes down

the road if you wish.

Go ahead and move your other units. Be sure and review all the buttons on the toolbar by simply moving your mouse slowly across them. What each one does will be shown in a small white box.

Once you have completed all movements, you may want some of your units to "go to ground." This simply means that instead of standing the units are in a crouched or lying down position. This can be done by selecting a unit with a double left click and then clicking on the "toggle ground" button in the menu icon section. This is the icon with the narrow white strip at the bottom. Once you do that, the selected units will then have a narrow white line at the bottom of their icon indicating their state. It will also be written on them in the unit list. You can also use the "0" key on the number pad to perform this action. Note that no points are expended when going to ground, however 3 MP's are required to stand back up.

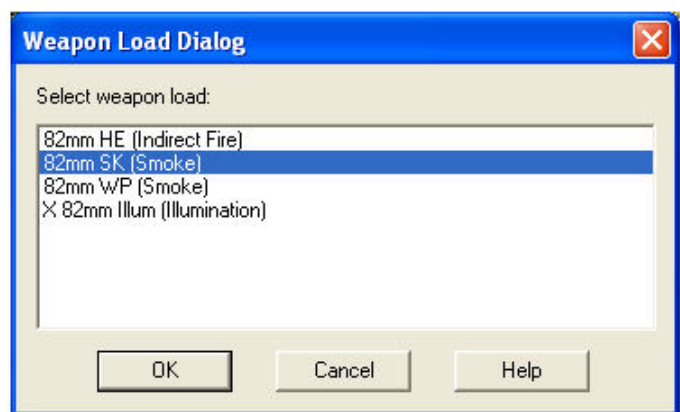
End your turn by pressing on the clock (Next Turn) button at the top of the screen when you have moved all your units. When the "Save as" screen appears give your game file a name and then click the "Save" button. Now the Mujahideen forces have their turn and once that is complete your turn dialog box will again appear. Repeat this process as you move your forces forward towards the objectives.

Notice that when your troops come into sight and range of the enemy their units will use what is called "opportunity" fire. Your forces will do this too during the AI's turn. They will fire on the enemy automatically as they have the opportunity. As you advance up the road your troops will begin to take fire from the emplaced Mujahideen units guarding the approaches to the town. You will note that as your units take fire they will often go "on ground", which is the natural reaction when someone is shooting at you! Keep this in mind when you go to move those units on your next turn, as a unit On Ground expends MP differently than one that is walking upright.

Also, now that you are taking fire and some of the enemy positions are revealed you need to alter your plans accordingly. You don't want to continue to just march up the open road, but rather you want to get your troops into some cover. So, lay down some suppressing fire with your small arms and supporting mortar teams and gradually moving forward, minimizing losses, but continuing your advance towards the objective hexes. Your placement will vary at this point, but take a look around you at the available terrain. What is there that can give you cover but also provide a LOS where you can put some fire down on the defenders? The trees at hexes 5,23 & 6,23 are the most likely candidates at this point, and diverting your western column between the various stands of trees and towards the forest is a much better course of action than continuing out in the open.

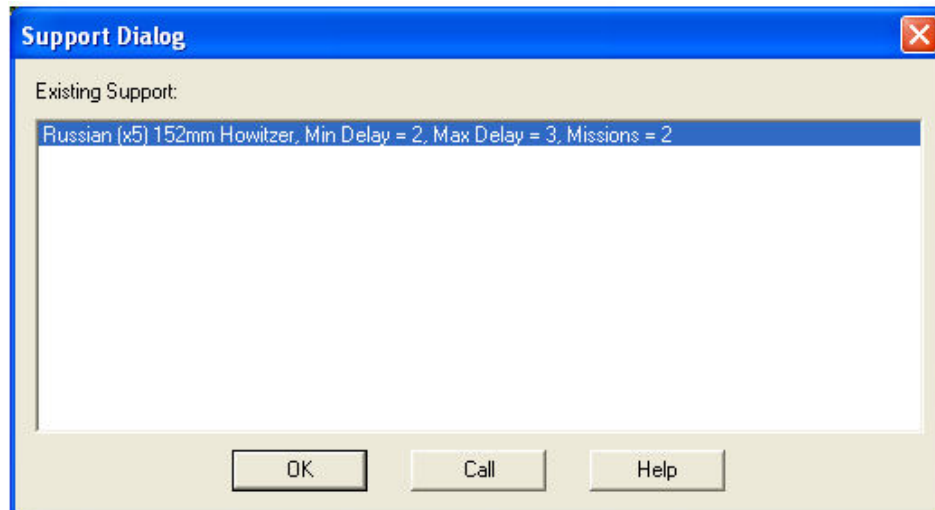
You may want to check just what the enemy can see. No need to move into their line of fire if you don't have to do so. Instead, select the hex in which the enemy soldiers are in and then select the Visible Hexes button. This shows you what the enemy can actually see. Use this knowledge to plot a course where you outflank and surround the enemy units, while staying out of their LOS.

And remember that dialog box you got at the beginning of the scenario? Well now its time to consider those elements. Given our current situation we can use the "Select Load" option on our mortar crew from the "Command" menu to switch to "82mmSK (Smoke)" rounds for our mortar and then place a smoke round at hex 6,20 to help block the LOS of the revealed Mujahideen units and allow our troops to move towards the hill without taking too many losses. The weapon itself must be selected in the Information box prior to executing the select load command. Remember though, we have a smoke limit of 2 for this scenario, which means only 2 rounds of smoke can be fired, so place those shots well...



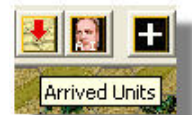
The second part of that box was support. This means you have high-powered long range artillery sitting off-map that you can place a radio call to and bring in heavy fire to suppress the defenders. You can do this by selecting the leader in the truck at the tail end of your eastern column (Captain of the 1st Airborne Company) and then pressing the "Artillery / Air Support" icon on the toolbar. In this new window that comes up you will see one entry for a battery of 5 152mm Howitzers. Note there's a minimum delay of 2 turns from the time you call them and a maximum of 3 turns until they are ready to deliver their fire mission. There

are also 2 missions available from these guns for this scenario. Also note that once fire missions become available they will be there every turn until their allotment is exhausted...but if you choose not to utilize a fire mission on a turn for some reason you must begin the "Call" procedure over from the beginning. So, select the Howitzers and then click the "Call" button, so we know more help is on the way, then click the "OK" button.



Once you have completed the above and finished moving your troops go ahead and advance the turn. Note that once the AI completes its turn and you get the lead back your smoke round(s) will disappear. This is because they only last for the duration of a 5 minute turn and then are considered to have dissipated by the breeze to no longer be effective cover. So when using it as a screen make sure and move quickly!

Reinforcements! This is great news. But where are they? You have to click them onto the map. After advancing the turn a window pops up stating reinforcements have arrived. To bring them on the map select the "Arrived Units" button on the tool bar and a new box appears listing your reinforcements. Highlight the unit and click "OK". Now they appear on the map. In this case it is the lead element of your third column of troops mentioned in the mission briefing.



In my scenario, the second turn after calling in the supporting fire I was notified that it was available. And this is very good news as my units were starting to get torn up by the well placed enemy troops. To use the support select the "Artillery / Air Support" icon on the toolbar again and this will open up a new window displaying the available fire missions. Choose the only one listed and then click the "Target" button. A new window will appear with the support piece pictured along with the time of round it is delivering. Now right-click on the map where you want the salvo delivered. Note: this is an approximate location and the actual destination

hexes could vary considerably, so it is highly recommended that you not select target hexes too close to your own troops if possible. I selected hex 24,18 as the target and the fire resolved in the surrounding 20 hexes or so.

Another note relating to fire missions...you must use them once the targeting dialog is opened. If you click the red X to close that window without firing you will lose the support.

In this scenario as with most SB scenarios, time is of the essence. You must continue to move your men so that they can be in a position to accomplish the scenario objective prior to the end of the allotted turns, so make every move count.

A note on firing...when you fire you can either select all the units in a hex and have them all fire all their weapons at one target hex, or you can be selective and fire different weapons at different targets, or choose not to use some weapons at all, to conserve their effectiveness. If you wish to be selective use the Information bar to choose the weapons you want to use.

As you play, you may find that some of the Mujahideen are very hard to finish off with ranged (distance) fire. In that case, try an assault. An assault occurs when you attempt to move into a hex containing enemy troops. It is resolved automatically and winning it depends on a few things including the morale of your units, the types of weapons you have and the condition of the enemy units.

I recommend trying assaults only if you feel your units are superior in number and state to those of the enemy units being attacked. Otherwise you may come out on the losing end. It can be very effective but it can also be a disaster for you. For example I have had a whole squad eliminated while assaulting a fortified position...a very painful loss to say the least!



On turn 10 you will receive your final reinforcement in this scenario in the form of a M-24D Hind. This is a helicopter with a variety of weapon systems that can allow you to provide some much needed support to your troops on the ground. Some things to note about these valuable assets though...if you fire more than a single salvo from a single location you will go into a "hovering" status which makes you more venerable to enemy ground fire. Keep moving your helicopter in one direction a few hexes to remove the hovering status. And really, in general, helicopters can be brought down easily...so it's a good idea to keep well out of range when ever possible. Another item is the potential to carry passengers, and in this case the hind can accommodate 8 passengers outside of the crew. To load passengers you would land in their hex and then select both them and the helicopter and then use the "Load/Pick up" command from the Toolbar. You can then move those units and deposit them if you wish. This is handy if you need to plug a gap in your defenses, get into position with supporting fire or to extract isolated troops. But again, remember that your helicopter's aren't invincible... they can be brought down, so beware!

I'm going to leave you on this battlefield now, Commander. You know how to see, move, shoot and assault. You have the basics. You are ready to do your own fighting. The more you play, the more adept you become as a commander. Many of the things we have mentioned here will become second nature to you. You'll go from a glorious victory to an ignominious defeat on occasion, but you will be learning and improving every time you play.

Category	Item	Value	Item	Value
Mujahideen Losses	Leader Losses	2	Leader Point Loss	4
	Men Losses	39	Men Point Loss	39
	Vehicle Losses	0	Vehicle Point Loss	0
	Gun Losses	0	Gun Point Loss	0
Soviet Losses	Leader Losses	2	Leader Point Loss	4
	Men Losses	37	Men Point Loss	37
	Vehicle Losses	0	Vehicle Point Loss	0
	Gun Losses	0	Gun Point Loss	0
Victory Values	Major Defeat	20	Minor Defeat	30
	Minor Victory	50	Major Victory	60
	Total Points	42	Outcome	Draw

When the scenario is over the Command Report will pop up with a message that the time limit is up. Clicking OK will then bring up the Victory Dialog. This box will show you the losses for both sides, the points awarded for Objectives captured, the Victory Values, Total Points scored and the Outcome.

As you can see from the image at left my fight was a very bloody one. While I was able to clear the village and thus achieve the physical objective for the operation my losses were high and prevented me from achieving a victory in this case. Can you do better?

You can display the Victory Dialog at any time during the scenario from the Info/Victory menu item. This will allow you to follow your progress, but do not be alarmed to see that your side is losing, particularly in the early part of a scenario. Often the winning side is not determined until the last couple of turns and you have plenty of time to accomplish your mission. When vehicles are involved in a

scenario the loss of them can radically affect the victory condition, so make sure you take care of your assets...a careless commander will be shipped back to Siberia for too many losses!

Feel free to save this battle and come back to it later if you want to do more exploring at this point. Whatever battle file you save can be given a name to identify it for later play. For example, you could name your file "first game" When you go back to the game simply click on "Open" from the file menu at the upper left, then click on the saved file.

All the members of this Soviet-Afghan War design team want this to be the start of many exciting gaming hours for you as you fight your way through the battles and campaigns included in this game. And don't forget...while the AI is a solid player in the Squad Battles series and can be quite a challenge, there's no substitute for a game against a real person. So adventure out on to the web and explore the on-line resources that exist to support that and the other HPS games when you are ready. This web page will help you get going:

<http://www.hist-sdc.com/hps/opponents.htm>

What's new?

For returning players to the Squad Battles series there have been a number of engine enhancements and additions to make the game series more enjoyable. They are listed below:

- 1) New optional rule "Alternative Fire Density" - units with less than 5 men, are now treated as having 5 men for fire resolution calculations, to reduce the "superman" effect of single men seen previously.
- 2) Bridge destruction with demolition charges.
- 3) Cache and Hidden objectives - Unknown normal objectives are "hidden", Unknown capture objectives are "caches", Unknown exit objectives are "escapes" and are defined in the scenario editor.
- 4) Rest, for men and weapons - for each turn that a unit has not moved, fired, assaulted, or has been fired upon, it is eligible to receive an average recovery of effectiveness based on the rest value for that side. This rest value also applies to all weapons carried by that unit.
- 5) Body Armor - The value will be displayed in the info area as "Armor". It is added to whatever default protection the unit otherwise has, including the default infantry protection value.
- 6) Vehicle Smoke - Vehicles can be flagged in the database as being able to make smoke. Then you can command that in the main program, subject to the smoke limit value. As the vehicle moves, smoke is left behind. Note: movement cost 2X when making smoke.
- 7) Chemical\Gas ability added.
- 8) Added a new Database editor to enable users to easily edit the various DAT files included with the game (Load, weapon & vehicle).
- 9) Added a new Parameter Data Editor to easily edit the PDT files that come with the game.

For updates, downloads and the latest information visit HPS at <http://www.hpssims.com/> or email support@hpssims.com.