Suomussalmi



*Let me tell you about **Suomussalmi**, a frozen corner of Finland where, in the winter of ’39, a handful of tough, stubborn Finns showed the world how a smaller force—if it’s smart, fast, and mean enough—can tear a lumbering giant to pieces.*

*The Russians came in heavy, marching two full divisions down those narrow forest roads, thinking they could just roll over Finland and split the country in half. But those Finns didn’t fight the war the way the textbooks said. They didn’t stand still and get crushed. They **moved**. They lived on skis, slipping through the woods like ghosts, striking the Soviet columns where they were weakest—supply lines, roadblocks, isolated pockets of troops.*

While the Russians froze in the open and bogged down in snowdrifts, the Finns carved them up piece by piece. They cut those long Soviet columns into little “motti” bundles—isolated groups with no food, no ammunition, no rescue. And then they finished them.

By early January, the Finns had smashed one Soviet division entirely and sent the other running back the way it came. What happened at Suomussalmi wasn't luck; it was proof that ***speed, ingenuity, and the will to win*** *can turn a frozen forest into a fortress and a small army into a battering ram.*

The Finns didn't just win a battle—they delivered a lesson every commander ought to remember:
Victory belongs to the side that fights smarter, moves faster, and never stops hitting.

~~ General Howitzer

6 VP's



Card Balance:

Russian – 4

Finnish – 6

Complexity:

3

Conditions:

Winter



Location:

Finland

Year:

1939

Theater:

Eastern Front

Campaign:

Russo – Finnish War

Summary:
The Finns switched sides during WW2, all in the name of defending themselves.

Objectives:
Six VP’s, plus if the Finns occupy three of the four hexes of Suomussalmi, they win immediately, which I have done, and is a very satisfying win.

Battlefield:
The battlefield for this scenario is marked by three frozen rivers cutting across the field of play and creating hazardous conditions for troop movements.

Troops:

Finns: 10 Infantry, 1 Artillery
Russians: 10 Infantry, 2 Armor, 1 Artillery

Winning as Russians

1. The Russians must defend the town of Suomussalmi, as it will be instant defeat if the Finns occupy 3 of the 4 town hexes. But the town is heavily defended with sandbagged troops, so your best course of action is to stay behind the sandbags and make the enemy throw themselves against your hardened defenses.

2. You have an Armor and three Infantry units in your lower right flank. They are being prevented from assisting the defense of Suomussalmi with what was historically a roadblock across the river. Quickly breakthrough the defending Infantry units by moving in for the attack and freeing up your Armor for some long-distance attacks which will blow that blockade away.

3. Use, at every opportunity, your heavily defended Artillery in the town of Suomussalmi to attack any Finish troops who would dare come near you.

4. Use your Armor in your left flank to attack any Ski Troops who are caught out in the open. Don’t waste your ammo on shooting into the woods until you have dealt with the easy targets.

Big Picture Strategy

1. This is a confusing scenario, as the Finns are not actually formally aligned with the Allies at this point (1939) in the war. They had to fight the Russians alone. Then from 1941-44, they were aligned with Germany. Finally in 1944-45, they made peace with Russia and began to attack the Germans in their country. The key power of the Finns are their Ski Troops. Use them to attack from the protection of cover. No need to leave them exposed in the open.

Winning as Finns

1. Finnish ski troops have a major movement advantage. They can move 0-3, and fire at 3 or 2. Plus they can move onto any terrain and still fire. So your infantry movement cards will allow you to quickly mass your troops for an attack.

2. You have an Artillery in your left section. Take every opportunity to move it forward to assist your Ski Troops in their attack.

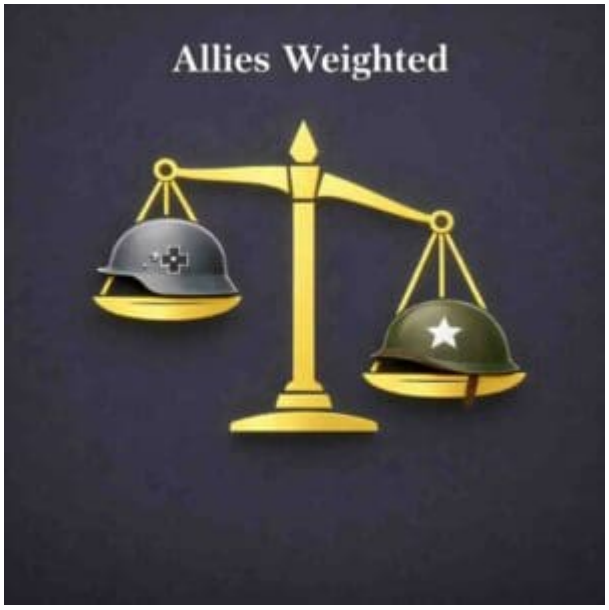
3. Remember that your Ski Troops can move into terrain like woods and still attack the enemy. This is a powerful advantage you should use whenever you can.

4. Because your Ski Troops only have three figures per unit they are much easier to destroy, so save your attacks until you have massed your troops together to hit the enemy repeatedly in a single attack. If you try to attack with just one or two units at a time, you are likely to get wiped out.

Battle Reports

(percentage of Allied victories):

54%



Author:

Days of Wonder

General Howitzer / Battle Reports

Suomussalmi [Russo-Finnish War]

Community results · All commanders

Complete an After Action Report on this battle

Please register in order to complete the AAR. Register

Please login, so your battle history can be updated. Login

Allied win rate**25.00%**
Average medals per side
Allies**4.3**Axis**5.8**
Submitted AARs
4Games reported
Allied victories**1 · 25.0%**
Axis victories**3 · 75.0%**

GeneralHowitzer recently played this battle.

General Howitzer / Community Strategy

Commander Strategy Notes

Battle-tested advice from registered commanders.

Allies 0Axis 0General 0

No approved allies strategy notes yet.

No approved axis strategy notes yet.

No approved general strategy notes yet.

Log in or register to share a strategy.

Campaigns featuring this scenario

Explore the scenarios in each campaign, listed in campaign order.

Eastern Front

1. Breakout at Klin→ — Open Scenario
2. Prokhorovka [Overlord]→ — Open Scenario
3. Breakout to Lisyanka→ — Open Scenario
4. Suomussalmi [Russo-Finnish War] Current scenario
5. Gates of Moscow [Typhoon]→ — Open Scenario

6. Red Barricades Factory Complex [Stalingrad]→ — Open Scenario
7. Ponyri [Kursk]→ — Open Scenario
8. Bug River [Barbarossa]→ — Open Scenario