

Royal 2nd Hungarian Army

In 1942, the Hungarian Second Army was given the task of protecting the 8th Italian Army's northern flank between Novaya Pokrovka on the Don River and Rossosh. This allowed the German Sixth Army to continue to attack Soviet General Vasily Chuikov's 62nd Army defending Stalingrad.

The Hungarian Second Army, as almost all of the armies protecting the flanks of the Sixth Army, was annihilated when the Soviets launched Operation Uranus, Operation Saturn, and Operation Little Saturn. As part of these operations, two Soviet pincers drove through the Romanian Third Army to the north of Stalingrad and the Romanian Fourth Army to the south, cutting off the Sixth Army.

On December 12, 1942, as a counter move, the Germans launched Operation Winter Storm to relieve their Sixth Army by attacking through the pincers of the Soviet armies participating in Operation Uranus. The Soviets counter-attacked on December 16, 1942, and launched Operation Little Saturn, penetrating between the Italian Eighth Army and the Hungarian Second Army at the junction held by the Italian Alpine Army Corps and threatening the flank of German forces attempting to relieve the Sixth Army by cutting the would-be relievers off at the Donets River.

On January 13, 1943, Russian forces, overwhelming in numbers and equipment, began the Voronezh-Kharkov Strategic Offensive Operation on the Bryansk, Voronezh, and Southwestern Fronts simultaneously. The Russians rapidly destroyed the Hungarian Second Army near Svoboda on the Don River. An attack on the German Second Army further north threatened to bring about an encirclement of that army as well, though it managed to withdraw and was forced to retreat. By February 5, 1943, troops of the Russian Voronezh Front were approaching Kharkov.

During its twelve months of activity on the Russian front, the Second Hungarian Army's losses were enormous. Of an initial force of about 200,000 Hungarian soldiers, about 100,000 were dead, 35,000 wounded, and 60,000 taken prisoners of war. Only about 40,000 men returned to Hungary, scapegoat by Hitler for the catastrophic Axis defeat. "No nation lost as much blood during World War II in such a short period of time."

The Hungarian Second Army, as most other Axis armies in the Army Group B, ceased to represent a meaningful fighting force. The German Sixth Army, encircled in Stalingrad, surrendered on February 2, 1943. The remnants of the Hungarian Second Army returned to Hungary on May 24, 1943.

Armored Division

The 1st Field Armored Division (1. Tábori Páncéloshadosztály) had the 30th Tank Regiment and the 1st Motorized Rifle Regiment as its primary components. The 30th Tank Regiment comprised a company of engineers and two tank battalions, each with one heavy tank company of 11 Pz IVs and two medium tank companies of Pz 38(t)s. The 1st Motorized Rifle Regiment consisted of three motorized rifle battalions and a motorcycle company.

The 8th Motorized Company was part of the 2nd Motorized Rifle Battalion when it was sent to defend the southern flank of the Hungarian 2nd Army near a bridgehead at Svoboda on the Don River. This company was totally destroyed while operating as a rear guard for the 1st Armor Division, and was never reconstituted.

