

“SOLDIER KINGS” VARIANT

Scorched Earth

The first Russian Campaign

1707-1709

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Historical Background

In 1700, tsar Peter “the Great” I of Russia together with his allies Denmark and Saxony attacked the Swedish Empire. Although vastly outnumbered, the young Swedish soldier king Charles XII succeeded both in defeating Denmark and in beating the Russian army in the battle of Narva.

While Charles turned against Saxony, Peter rebuilt his army, conquered some Swedish provinces south of the Baltic Sea and founded the city of St. Petersburg there.

Having finished off Saxony in 1706, Charles XII prepared his veteran army for a march on Moscow. Still outnumbered, but qualitatively superior, the Swedes left Saxony in August, 1707.

The Russian army retreated, leaving only scorched earth behind. Already close to Smolensk, the Swedish supplies became so short in September 1708 that Charles had to abort his advance on Moscow. Instead, he turned south to the fertile Ukraine, hoping to gain support from the local Cossacks and to win Crimea and Turkey as allies.

The Swedes suffered terribly though in the very hard winter of 1708/09. In June, 1709, their weakened army was decisively beaten in the battle of Poltava. The first Russian campaign of a western ruler had failed.

Time

The variant begins in Fall, 1707. After the Winter, 1708/09 turn, one die is rolled. On a result of 6, the variant ends. Otherwise, it ends after the following turn on a result of 6 or 5 and so on.

Space

Only the Europe map is used. East Prussia and Hesse are part of Sweden (representing Baltic and German possessions of that empire at the time). Use British control markers. Volhynia is Turkish. Archangel has a port bordering the North Atlantic.

Setup

Sweden and Russia are major powers, Poland and Crimea minor countries. Sweden is allied to Poland and may gain Crimea as an ally. Other states are not affected.

Russia sets up first:

Force pool: 1*3/2 army, 4*2/1 army, 5*1/1 army, 2*1/1 fleet, Peter I (leadership rating 2 – use one of the blue counters with golden numbers), Menshikov (1), Apraxin (1)

At start: 6 armies (not the 3/2) and all leaders are setup in Russia, Warsawa and/or Polesia. Russia has 11*money and 20*manpower.

Sweden:

Force pool/at start: 2*3/2 army, 1*2/1 army, 1*2/1 fleet, Charles XII (3, he has the same characteristics as Frederick II for all purposes, for example movement allowance, initiative die roll etc.), Lewenhaupt (2). The Swedes may be setup in Saxony, East Prussia and Finland. For East Prussia and Finland each, the limit is 1*army, 1*fleet, Lewenhaupt. Sweden has 8*money and manpower respectively.

Poland:

Force pool/at start: 1*1/1 army which may not be replaced or rebuilt if losses occur. The Polish army is setup in any Polish area not occupied by Russians. It may not leave Poland and is eliminated if forced to do so (historically, Charles XII had installed a puppet government in Poland which was not effective).

Crimea:

Force pool: 5*1/1 army

At start: 3*1/1 army which are setup in Crimea.

Crimea can be brought into play as a Swedish minor ally by playing a Minor Country Alliance card. The Swedish player receives a +2 bonus on his die roll if Charles XII is in Ukraine and has conquered it or if event card Cossack Revolt has been played – if both conditions apply +3.

Russia may try to “neutralize” a Swedish-allied Crimea by playing a Minor Country Alliance card. The procedure is the same as if stealing an ally. If Crimea is neutralized, its armies are removed from the map. Conquered areas remain Crimean.

Sweden and Russia receive 4 event cards each. The Scorched Earth event card is set aside and the Russian player always has the option of exchanging one of his event cards for it.

The following event cards are not used:

- East India Company Troops
- New Leader
- Hungarian Revolt
- Descents
- Freikorps/-battalions
- Provincials go Home
- Pirates
- Jesuit Plot
- Holy Roman Empire Mercenaries
- Papal Bull

Victory condition

The player controlling Moscow at the end of the variant wins.