



Jeremy Harder

German Gepanzerte Aufklärungsschwadron

14th Panzer Division

Panzer-Regiment 36 and Kradschützen-Bataillon 64
Supported by
Sturmpanzer Abteilung 218



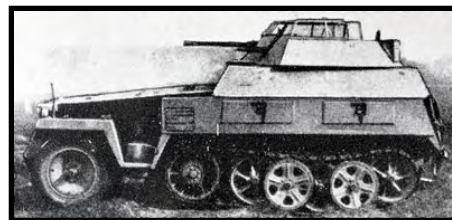
Area of Operations

This Flames of War Gepanzerte Aufklärungsschwadron represents units from the 14th Panzer Division, specifically elements of the 14th Panzer Division's Panzer-Regiment 36 (36th Panzer Regiment) and Kradschützen-Bataillon 64 (64th Motorcycle Battalion), with support from Sturmpanzer Abteilung 218, attached to 3rd Panzer Army, XXXX Panzer Corps, in the summer of 1944.

Although motorcycles were still used through the end of the war for duties ranging from medical transport to messaging, the bulk of the Kradschützenbataillonen (motorcycle battalions) swapped in the BMW motorcycles for Kubelwagens, Geländewagenen, and Panzerwägenen.



The 3rd Panzer Army, commanded by General Raus, organized a relief force to two major forces in Eastern Prussia: the XXXIX Panzer and XXXX Panzer Corps. The Panzer Corps' mission was a relief force whose mission was to advance into Lithuania and reestablish contact with Army Group North fighting for its life in the Courland Pocket (aka Kurland Pocket). The Courland Pocket was created in late October 1944 when, during the Baltic Strategic Offensive Operation, the Red Army's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Baltic Fronts engaged German Army Group Centre and Army Group North. The result of the series of battles was a permanent loss of contact between Army Groups North and Centre, and the creation of the Courland Pocket in Latvia. The isolated Army Group North was later renamed Army Group Courland.



Raus launched his relief attack, which he dubbed Operation Doppelkopf, on August 16. The inland attack of the XXXX Panzer Corps was unlucky, running into ten Soviet infantry divisions, backed by three artillery divisions and four antitank brigades; XXXX Panzer Corps gained little ground. The attack of the XXXIX Panzer Corps was more fortunate and on 20 August with the fire support of the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen and destroyers Z-25 and Z-28 reached Army Group North's outposts near



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History

The 14. Panzer-Division was formed in August of 1940 from the 4. Infanterie-Division, with Panzer-Regiment 36 taken from the 4. Panzer-Division and initially saw action during the Balkans Campaign in March and April, 1941. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June, 1941, the 14. Panzer became part of the southern sector of the Eastern Front. The division was engaged nearly continuously throughout the summer, fall, and winter of 1941, taking part in the Battles for Kiev and Rostov in the Chernigovka Pocket, and in the defensive engagements against the first Soviet winter counter-offensive of 1941-42. Having lasted through the first Soviet winter counter-offensive, the Germans shifted their attack from the Moscow region south against the steppes of the Ukraine, with the ultimate goal of taking the vital regions of the steppes, Don and Volga River and the Caucasus far to the south. Still a part of the southern sector of the front, the 14. Panzer took part in the German assault and raced across the steppes passing through the Mius, Charkow, Kupiansk, and Don Regions before becoming engaged and then encircled in the Stalingrad Pocket in the Winter of 1942-43, where it was completely destroyed in 1943.



In April, 1943 the 14. Panzer-Division was reformed in Brittany, France and sent back to the Eastern Front in October, 1943. The 14. Panzer then took part in the 2nd Battle for Kiev and in defensive actions during the withdrawal from the Dnieper. From January to June, 1944, the 14. Panzer took part in actions in the Kirovograd, Zveningerodka, Kishinevo, and Jassi regions. The 14. Panzer was pulled from the front in July, 1944 for rest and refit, and then sent to the northern sector of the Eastern Front in August to take part in positional defensive actions in the Courland Pocket, mainly near Libau. After Berlin fell, elements of the 14. Panzer (along with parts of the 11. Infanterie and 12. Panzer Divisions) were returned to Germany on the last available shipping before Army Group Courland capitulated, and thus escaped Russian captivity. These units were selected because they had been the “firefighters” of the army group when the Russian tried unsuccessfully to crush the pocket six times in the winter of 1944-45.



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