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Citadel, Prokhorovka and Kharkov: The armoured losses of the II SS Panzer Korps *Sonderverbände* during the battle of Kursk, July-August 1943

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ABSTRACT

The three armoured SS *Sonderverbände* (special units) Leibstandarte, Das Reich and Totenkopf which constituted the II SS Panzer Korps played a key role during the battle of Kursk (5.7–23.8.1943), first during Operation Citadel (5–16.7.43) and then (minus the Leibstandarte) during the defence of Kharkov (3–23.8.43). For the first time, as a result of a recent archival discovery (complete armoured inventories for 20.7.43 and 1.8.43), this article can give the exact number of armoured losses the II SS Panzer Korps sustained during Operation Citadel, which included the supposedly crippling armoured battle of Prokhorovka (12.7.43). The article also establishes the actual number of operational AFV that was available to the II SS Panzer Korps before, during and after Operation Citadel. Taken together this information allows for a detailed examination of Hitler's strategy preceding the defence of Kharkov, including his decision to send the II SS Panzer Korps to the Mius Front (30.7–2.8.43).

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Introduction

By the summer of 1943 the war on the Eastern Front had long since been lost by Germany. The Red Army's vast superiority in men and material meant that victory was now impossible for Germany. The German Army had been worn down during the years 1941–1943 when the Red Army had been the only force capable of fighting the bulk of the *Wehrmacht*. However, in order to finally defeat the *Wehrmacht* vast battles still had to be fought. The battle of Kursk was the largest of these battles; indeed the 50 day battle (5.7.43–23.8.43) is regarded as the largest in military history. The battle consisted of the German offensive Operation Citadel (a pincer attack on the Kursk salient – this article focuses on the southern arm of this pincer), and the two Soviet counter-offensives (aimed at Orel and Kharkov). During the fighting the two sides deployed more than 4 million troops, 69,000 cannon and launchers, 13,000 tanks and self-propelled guns, and almost 12,000 aircraft. The bitterness of the fighting is shown by the fact that the Red Army lost a total of at least 6,064 tanks.¹ It is clear that the Soviet Union

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¹Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017), 83–4. The breakdown of total write-offs of Soviet tanks and assault guns was 1,614 during the defensive phase (Operation Citadel), 2,586 during the Orel counter-offensive, and 1,864 during the Belgorod-Kharkov counter-offensive.

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contributed the most towards the overall Allied victory during the Second World War. Yes, economic factors and the Western Allies air and sea power need to be taken into consideration, but by the time the Western Allies finally landed in Normandy in the summer of 1944 the *Wehrmacht* was a shadow of its former self. The reason for this was chiefly down to the massive loss of material and years of bloodletting the *Wehrmacht* had suffered on the Eastern Front.² There is no doubt that the Red Army, despite suffering very high losses in men and material, won a convincing victory at Kursk.³ However, in a battle of the size and scope of the battle of Kursk some setbacks for the Red Army were inevitable. The overall Soviet victory at Kursk is not in any way diminished by highlighting examples where the Germans inflicted serious losses on the Red Army (Figure 1).

For the first time as a result of a recent archival discovery this article is able to reveal the true number of armoured fighting vehicles (AFV – tanks, assault guns and tank destroyers) losses the II SS Panzer Korps sustained during Operation Citadel (5–16.7.1943).⁴ As only units from the II SS Panzer Korps fought in the armoured battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43 this discovery will also impact the historiography of that battle. The article will confirm that in July 1943, instead of being crushed, the II SS Panzer Korps emerged relatively unscathed from Operation Citadel and, were it not for Hitler's operational and strategic incompetence, would have played a decisive part (at least initially) in the defence of Kharkov the following month.

The originality of the methodology used in the formation of this, and the author's previous article could be described as 'deep research' (embedding oneself in the finite statistical data located in a large array of archival documents which are spread over a broad chronological range). The meticulous and exhaustive study of vast amounts of detailed statistical information from company to Army Group level over an extended period of time enables a hitherto unknown level of understanding to be obtained of the operational and strategic levels of war. For example, this form of research enabled the author to determine the true strength of the II SS Panzer Korps immediately following the conclusion of Operation Citadel and the battle of Prokhorovka, both in terms of the II SS Panzer Korps armoured inventory and operational readiness. Only after this information was gained did the true folly of Hitler's decision making following the battle of

²Wegner, Bernd, "The War against the Soviet Union 1942–1943" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VI – The Global War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2015), 863–71. See also Kroener, Bernhard R, "Management of Human Resources, Deployment of the Population, and Manning the Armed Forces in the Second Half of the War (1942–1944)" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume V/II – Organization and Mobilization in the German Sphere of Power: Wartime Administration, Economy, and Manpower Resources 1942–1944/5* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2015), 1012–23.

³Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 200 & 200 n. According to Russian sources during the battle of Kursk the Soviets lost 863,303 men, of whom 254,470 dead or missing. Of these personnel losses, 177,847 were incurred in the defensive phase, 429, 890 during the Orel counter-offensive, and 255,566 during the Belgorod-Kharkov counter-offensive. Boris V Sokolov points out a number of contradictions in the official Soviet account and estimates the losses at 1,677,000 men. See Sokolov, Boris V "The Battle for Kursk, Orel and Charkov: Strategic Intentions and Results. A Critical View of Soviet Historiography", in *Gezeitenwechsel*, 69–88. German losses over this period (5.7–23.8.43) were approximately 170,000, of whom 46,500 dead or missing. 54,182 (11,023 dead or missing) during Operation Citadel; Orel offensive 86,064 (25,515 dead or missing); Belgorod-Kharkov offensive just under 30,000 (10,000 dead or missing).

⁴All archival documents in this article are located at the US National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD unless otherwise stated. AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

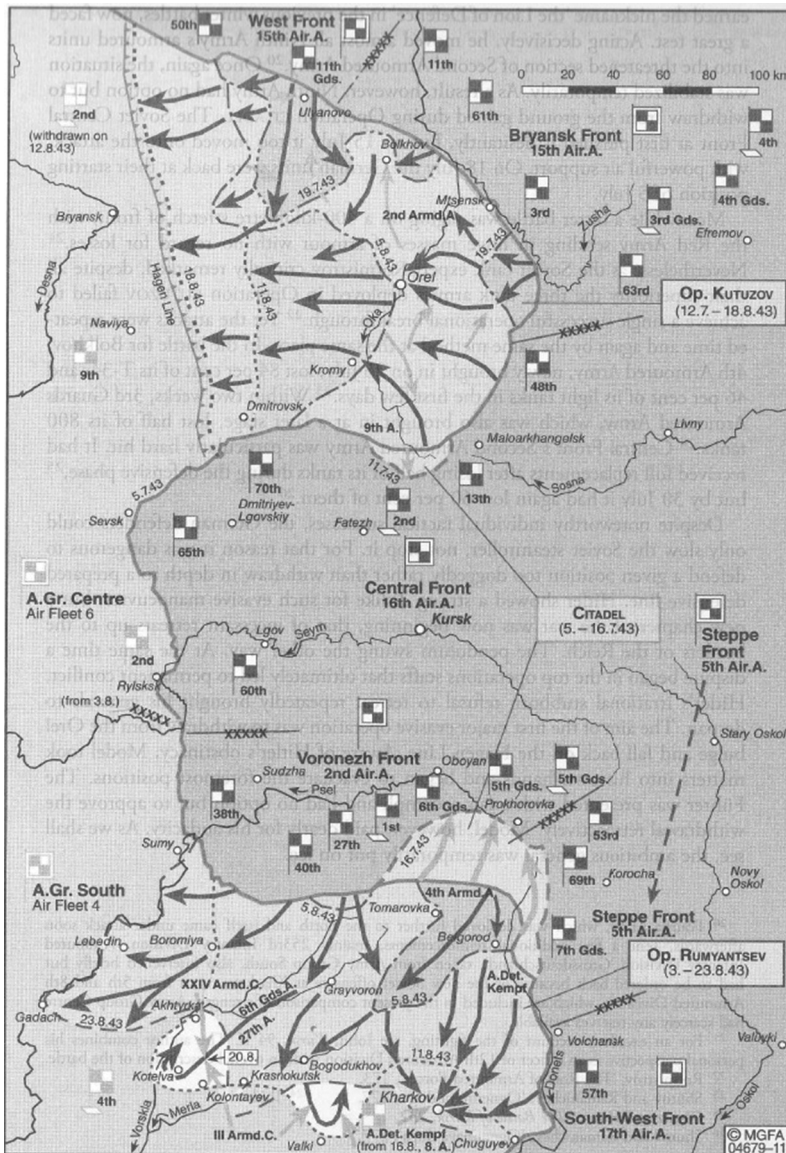


Figure 1. The battle of the Kursk Salient (5 July to 23 August 1943), source: map II.IV.7., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the second world war volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Prokhorovka become visible. Other military historians may well find utility in this type of methodology. Although time-consuming the results surely warrant such a dedicated approach.

The battle of Prokhorovka lends itself to this form of research as the results enable the reader to cut through the battle's extensive mythology and faulty scholarship. Soviet and Western historiography for many years claimed that between 76.6% (400 AFV) and 57.5% (300 AFV) of the II SS Panzer Korps AFV was destroyed during the battle. Indeed, as recently as 2020 there were reports in Russia that claimed the II SS Panzer Korps lost 75%

of its AFV at Prokhorovka.⁵ However, as a result of the author's archival discovery of the II SS Panzer Korps' first post-Operation Citadel armoured inventory (20.7.43 – all trace of this inventory was thought to be lost), this article can reveal that in reality a maximum of 3.1% (16 AFV – including 2 AFV requiring homeland maintenance) of the II SS Panzer Korps AFV were destroyed between 11–20.7.43, as stated this included the battle of Prokhorovka (12.7.43). Remarkably, the author can also state for the first time that the II SS Panzer Korps lost just 7.5% (41 AFV) of its pre-Operation Citadel AFV inventory during the entire operation. In addition, it is clear that the battle of Prokhorovka had no long-term impact on German AFV operational readiness. In the early hours of 11.7.43 (the day prior to the battle) the II SS Panzer Korps possessed 339 operational AFV while on the evening of 18.7.43 the Korps could call on 350 operational AFV. Therefore, the Korps operational strength actually increased over this short period by 11 AFV (a maximum of 4 new AFV were received by the II SS Panzer Korps between 5–18.7.43).⁶

However, when reading this article it should not be forgotten that the SS Panzergrenadier Divisions Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler (LSSAH), Das Reich (DR) and Totenkopf (SS-T) which constituted the II SS Panzer Korps at the start of July 1943 were part of a paramilitary organisation that fought for, and was an integral part of, an evil and abhorrent nationalist regime that was based on a racist ideology of intolerance, hatred and aggressive expansionism.

The three divisions of II SS Panzer Korps and the German Army's Grossdeutschland division were all (due to their expanded table of organisation and strength) considered *Sonderverbände* (special units). As a result they played a central role in the German operations during the battle of Kursk in July and August 1943.⁷ In July 1943 the divisions of II SS Panzer Korps were arguably at their peak in terms of troop quality, tactical knowledge, technological advancement of weaponry and AFV operational readiness vis-a-vis the Red Army.⁸ Although late August 1943 saw the introduction of the advanced Panther tank into the Waffen SS, by contrast troop quality had started to ebb and as a consequence tactical superiority had begun to be diluted, AFV operational levels began to plummet and supply issues developed. In the summer of 1943 the Red Army, despite massive superiority in tank numbers, was still reliant on the T-34 tank with its 76 mm main gun which had become inferior in firepower to the latest German Pz IV with its 75 mm long barrelled weapon. Significantly the Pz IV was present with the II SS Panzer Korps in large numbers (168–8 of which were infantry support tanks) at the start of July. The Pz VI Tiger tank although only available in small numbers (42) was imperious on the battlefield. The by now outdated Pz III with the 50 mm long barrelled main gun was still present with the korps (138 – primarily with DR and SS-T) but it could still prove a threat to Red Army

⁵Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 120–21, 128–34; See post from the Official Twitter account of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia on 12.7.2020: 'On 12 July 1943 the largest tank battle in history commenced at Prokhorovka, part of the enormous Battle of Kursk. The Red Army withstood Nazi onslaught, pushed them back, destroying 75% of their tanks. That same day Soviets launched counter offensive to crush the enemy' https://twitter.com/mfa_russia/status/1282197556626432000 accessed on 12.7.2020.

⁶See Table 25, Table 26, Table 27 and Table 28. The lack of an II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory for 20.7.43 is alluded to in the transcript of a 2018 interview with the noted Kursk historian Valeriy Zamulin. This transcript can be found on the excellent *Tank Archives* blog: <http://www.tankarchives.ca/2018/11/zamulin-on-losses.html> accessed on 15.12.2018.

⁷Friedli, Lukas, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2 Vol 1*. (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2010), 162.

⁸Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 157–68.

tanks if operated by an experienced crew.⁹ Superior German tactics (often flexible), command & control (all German tanks possessed two-way radios, whereas only Red Army company command tanks was so equipped), three man turrets (as opposed to the Soviet two), high calibre optics and accurate weapons all added to the difficult task faced by Soviet tankers in the summer of 1943.¹⁰ These factors undoubtedly contributed to the disproportionately low AFV losses suffered by the three SS divisions compared to the Red Army armoured units that they faced in July and August 1943. Ironically it also seems that from late August 1943 the Germans' inability to return large amounts of their damaged tanks to action also contributed to a reduction of German AFV total losses (*Totalausfälle* – TF) – the AFV were simply not on the battlefield to be shot at!¹¹

The author's previous two articles on the subject focused primarily on the battle of Prokhorovka on 12 July 1943, and the limited negative impact the battle had on the II SS Panzer Korps divisional AFV inventories or even on short-term operational readiness (see Operation Roland preparations below and 18.7.43 AFV operational numbers in Table 6). The first article 'A Visual Examination of the battle of Prokhorovka' gave a detailed visual description of the battle by presenting both original and freshly analysed Luftwaffe reconnaissance images of the battlefield taken in July and August 1943 (including highlighting for the first time such fundamentals as the location of the notorious anti-tank ditch in the images); in other words the article explored the immediate impact of the battle.¹² The second article 'Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944' highlighted the fact that the vast majority of the German armour present with the main participants the LSSAH and DR, had survived the battle and indeed many of these AFV were still in existence well into the winter of 1943/44.¹³ The article therefore explored the long-term impact of the battle of Prokhorovka. In regards to DR this was largely achieved by matching the chassis numbers of its AFV (including 52 ex-LSSAH panzers received on 28.7.43–51 were present at Prokhorovka) before and after the battle (from October 1943) in the monthly divisional inventories. After Operation Citadel the LSSAH did not see action again until November 1943. As a result it was relatively straightforward to establish in the post-Operation Citadel records which of the LSSAH's AFV were of Prokhorovka vintage. In addition, even though SS-T did not, to any great extent, participate in the battle of Prokhorovka, the division's post-Operation Citadel AFV losses were also chronicled primarily as on 28.7.43 SS-T received 42 ex-LSSAH panzers (38 of which were present at Prokhorovka).¹⁴

The author's second article also addressed a number of outstanding issues relating to the number of total losses the LSSAH had supposedly suffered during the battle of Prokhorovka. For example, it was evidenced that it was extremely likely that 3 rather than 4 LSSAH Pz IV were total write-offs (another LSSAH Pz IV was recovered and categorised –3.a- for homeland

⁹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390.

¹⁰Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 157–68.

¹¹Compare declining operational AFV numbers in Tables 20–24 and Figure 15.

¹²NARA Series RG 373: German Flown Aerial Photography, 1939–1945. See specifically photographs relating to the battlefield of Prokhorovka: for 14 July see; GX-2696-SK-23, GX-2696-SK-24 and GX-2696-SK-52. For 16 July see; GX-3734-SK-61 (incorrectly dated as 15 July by NARA). For 7 August see; GX-3942-SK-69. Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History*, Vol.18, No.2 (2019), 115–63.

¹³Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 1–87.

¹⁴II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80.

maintenance).¹⁵ It was also shown that a LSSAH Tiger that was said to have been immobilised during the battle still possessed the clear potential (given its continued proximity to SS-T troops) to have been eventually classified as a total loss.¹⁶ This article will provide further supporting evidence in regards to the potential fate of this LSSAH Tiger. It will also establish for the first time the total number of ex-Soviet T-34 that were lost by DR during Operation Citadel – including the potential for a loss occurring during the battle of Prokhorovka. It will conclude with a reflection on the accuracy of the battle of Prokhorovka AFV total loss sources, and offer a cautionary note against any claims of a definitive loss total for the battle. This article should be viewed as forming the final part of a trilogy, alongside the author's two recent articles on the subject.

The 6th Army's *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* 1.8.43

There has hitherto been a lack of confirmatory evidence regarding the number of total losses (3a & 3.b types) that the II SS Panzer Korps suffered during Operation Citadel, even though one could point to a few total loss reports from July 1943.¹⁷ One of these total loss reports came from a seemingly very creditable and reliable source namely the II SS Panzer Korps engineer. The report covered losses the korps suffered between 5–18.7.43.¹⁸ The report recorded losses as either total losses (category 3.b) or those requiring Homeland Maintenance in Germany (category 3.a but also potentially unofficially in category 2.c – i.e. allowed to remain in an divisional inventory). As far as the author is aware this document first appeared in the historiography of the battle of Kursk in 2007.¹⁹ As only an engineer had the authority to write off a tank as a total loss the importance of this document is clear (Figure 2).

However, without any (seemingly) surviving SS *Sonderverbände* ten-day status reports or end of month chassis number inventories for the period of 11–20.7.43 or 21.7–1.8.43 which covered the latter period of Operation Citadel (11–16.7.43, including the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43), the subsequent defensive operations (17–20.7.43, the II SS Panzer Korps HQ, LSSAH & DR withdrew from the front on 17.7.43 while SS-T left the front on

¹⁵PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31. Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 19–24.

¹⁶Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, p.127 & p.127 n.; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily report, Totenkopf reports Soviet attacks throughout the day in the area in question. 18.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII Korps HQ planned orders for Totenkopf to begin to evacuate the area on the night of 18–19.7.43. 18.7.43, T314, R1171, F000394; II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 17–19.7.43, T354, R605, F000100-10; II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035; III Pz-AK, Map of korps frontline 17.7.43, T314, R198, F000323; III Pz-AK, Map of Attila line etc. 17–19.7.43, T314, R198, F000325; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 24–32.

¹⁷Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, 5–17.7.43 Totalverluste; II SS Panzer Korps, Correspondence from II SS Panzer Korps 1a to Hitler's SS adjutant Fritz Darges at FHQ, Status of II SS Panzer Korps at midday 21.7.43 (sent 23.7.43), T354, R605, F000853; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31.

¹⁸II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31.

¹⁹See Alexander Tomzov's chapter in *Tankovy udar. Sovetskie tanki v boyakh. 1942–1943* (Moscow: Eksmo 2007).

the evening of 20.7.43) and the period prior to the II SS Panzer Korps returning to combat on 30.7.43 (21–30.7.43) then we had no way of confirming whether the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's loss report was truly accurate, particularly in regards to SS-T losses.²⁰ The engineer's report did look to have the potential to be definitive but without the necessary confirmatory evidence from the latter half of July this could not be declared the case.

Importantly, it has now proved possible to locate the 6th Army's *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* for 1.8.43 (Figure 3) which covered the period 21.-7–1.8.43. This document gives the number of operational, short-term damaged (under 14 days) and long-term damaged (over 14 days) AFV (per type) that were in the inventories of the armoured units of 6th Army on the Mius Front on 1.8.1943.²¹ Crucially, the document includes the SS Panzergrenadier Divisions Das Reich and Totenkopf, which in the previous few days had been transferred to 6th Army's control.²² The *Wochenmeldung* tells us that Das Reich had 172 panzers in its inventory on 1.8.44, while SS-T had 159 panzers on the same date.²³ If we include the assault guns and tank destroyers that DR and SS-T were known to have had on 1.8.43 the numbers for AFV are; DR 216 AFV and SS-T 202.²⁴

Remarkably, the *Wochenmeldung* also offers us the first opportunity to view the respective AFV inventories for DR and SS-T in the previous ten-day status report of 20.7.43; these reports covered the period 11–20.7.43. We can see that on 20.7.43 Das Reich had 130 panzers in its inventory, while SS-T had 132 panzers on its books.²⁵ Again if we include assault guns and tank destroyers we can see DR had 174 AFV while SS-T had between 175–177 AFV.²⁶ The 20.7.43 AFV status report

²⁰II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 18–22.7.43, T354, R606, F000038; II SS Panzer Korps, Gliederung des II SS Panzer Korps am 22 und 23.7.43 bis zur Bereitstellung und Lage bei XXXX.A.K., T354, R606, F000039; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellungs u. Angriffsplan für den Angriff am 24.7.43, T354, R606, F000040; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050-51.

²¹AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

²²II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043.

²³AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441. For an unknown reason DR sole Pz II was not included in *Wochenmeldung* even though there was a column for this type – the Pz II was not lost until the autumn of 1943 – see appendix of author's last article *Surviving Prokhorovka*. DR also had a Bef Pz I, however, Pz I were not recorded by the *Wochenmeldung*. SS-T had neither Pz I nor Pz II. The LSSAH also had begun Operation Citadel with 3 Pz I, of which 1 was Bef, and 4 Pz II. The only light panzer lost by the II SS Panzer Korps during Operation Citadel was a LSSAH Pz I Bef which was lost between 5–10.7.43, PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, written 12.7.43, T313, R390; For consistency the author has not recorded light tanks in the tables contained in this article.

²⁴AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; In addition for the launch of Operation Citadel each of the three divisions of the II SS Panzer Korps possessed 12 Wespe self-propelled light field howitzers and 6 Hummel self-propelled heavy field howitzers. No losses to these weapons were reported during Operation Citadel. See appendix in author's last article *Surviving Prokhorovka*.

²⁵AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

²⁶AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390.

Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod.				
Bis zum 22.7.43 haben die Divisionen für die Zeit des Einsatzes im Raum Belgorod vom 5.7.- 18.7.43 folgende Totalausfälle an Kfz.-Großgerät gemeldet:				
1.) Pz.Kpfw. u. Stu.Gesch., sowie Sfl. unterteilt nach Div.				
<u>L. H. - A. H.</u>				
Pz.Kpfw.	Ib	1		
" "	III	1		
" "	IV	9	davon 2 zur Inst. Heimat	
" "	VI	1	zur Inst. Heimat	
Stu.Gesch.		3		
Pak Sfl.		3	davon 1 zur Inst. Heimat	
<u>Das Reich</u>				
Pz.Kpfw.	III	2		
Pz.Kpfw.	IV	6		
Pz.Kpfw.	VI	1		
Stu.Gesch.		2		
<u>Totenkopf</u>				
Pz.Kpfw.	III	6	davon wurde 1 wieder geborgen u. instandgesetzt.	
" "	IV	7	" "	
" "	VI	1		
Stu.Gesch.		1		
Pak Sfl.		2		
2.) Sd.Kfz. S. P. W. unterteilt nach Divisionen.				
<u>L. H. - A. H.</u>				
<u>Schitz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
250/1		2		
251		1		
251/1		4		
251/9		2		
251/10		4		
<u>Pz.Sp.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
222		1		
261		1		
<u>Das Reich</u>				
<u>Schitz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
250/1		1		
<u>Totenkopf</u>				
<u>Schitz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
251/1		8	davon 2 zur Inst. Heimat	
251/10		1		
<u>Pz.Sp.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
223		1		
<u>Pz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.</u>				
263		1		

Figure 2. II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5-18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31.

is of fundamental importance to our understanding of the II SS Panzer Korps losses during Operation Citadel and of course the battle of Prokhorovka, which was fought on 12.7.43 solely by units of II SS Panzer Korps (principally LSSAH and DR). By comparing the SS divisional inventories at the launch of Operation Citadel on 4.7.43 (the offensive began the following day) with those of 10.7.43,

20.7.43 and 1.8.43 we are finally able to obtain the true number of AFV losses the II SS Panzer Korps suffered during Operation Citadel.²⁷ The main importance of the 1.8.43 status report is that it allows us to accurately decipher the makeup of 20.7.43 status report per tank type. Therefore, this new article explores the short-term impact of Operation Citadel and the battle of Prokhorovka on the divisions of the II SS Panzer Korps (See Table 1 to 8).

Table 1. II SS Panzer Korps – Pre-Operation Citadel AFV inventory (5.7.43).²⁸

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Inventory 4.7.43	13	83	-	13	9	118	35	21	174
DR Inventory 4.7.43	62	33	24	14	9	142	34	12	188
SS-T Inventory 4.7.43	63	52	-	15	9	139	35	11	185
Total	138	168	24	42	27	399	104	44	547

Table 2. II SS Panzer Korps – pre-operation Citadel operational AFV (5.7.43).²⁹

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational DR 4.7.43	11	79	-	12	9	111	34	20	165
DR Operational 4.7.43	47	30	18	12	8	115	33	11	159
SS-T Operational 4.7.43	59	47	-	11	8	125	28	11	164
Total	117	156	18	35	25	351	95	42	488

Table 3. II SS Panzer Korps – pre-battle of Prokhorovka AFV inventory (12.7.43).³⁰

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Inventory (01:00 11.7.43)	12	78	-	12–13*	9	111–112	33	19	163–164
DR Inventory (01:00 11.7.43)	60	31	22	13	9	135	34	12	181
SS-T Inventory (01:00 11.7.43)	61	48	-	14	9	132	34	11	177
Total	133	157	22	39–40	27	378–379	101	42	521–522

Table 4. II SS Panzer Korps – pre-battle of Prokhorovka operational AFV (12.7.43).³¹

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational 01:00 11.7.43	5	41	-	4	6	56	23	17	96
DR Operational 01:00 11.7.43	40	16	8	1	5	70	29	11	110
SS-T Operational 01:00 11.7.43	53	30	-	11	7	101	21	11	133
Total	98	87	8	16	18	227	73	39	339

²⁷PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

²⁸PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

²⁹Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88.

³⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

*This depends on which LSSAH Tiger was actually written off.

³¹Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88.

Table 5. II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory following operation Citadel & its aftermath (21.7.43).³²

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Inventory 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	12	74	-	12	9	107	32	22	161
DR Inventory 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	60	27	21	13	9	130	32	12	174
SS-T Inventory at 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	61	48	-	14	9	132	34	9-11*	175-177
Total	133	149	21	39	27	369	98	43-45	510-512

Table 6. II SS Panzer Korps operational AFV following operation Citadel & its aftermath (evening 18.7.43).³³

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational 19:25 18.7.43	7	55	-	9	8	79	28	16	123
DR Operational 19:25 18.7.43	36	24	17	9	7	93	28	10	131
SS-T Operational 19:25 18.7.43	30	29	-	7	7	73	20	3	96
Total	73	108	17	25	22	245	76	29	350

Table 7. SS *Sonderverbände* AFV inventory following the capture of Hill 213.9 (1.8.43).³⁴

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
DR Inventory 01:00 2.8.43	58*	60	21	22	11*	172	32	12	216
SS-T Inventory 01:00 2.8.43	61	67	-	22	9	159	34	9	202
Total	119	127	21	44	20	331	66	21	418

Table 8. SS *Sonderverbände* operational AFV following the capture of Hill 213.9 (1.8.43).³⁵

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
DR Operational 01:00 2.8.43	23	15	6	1	8	53	16	10	79
SS-T Operational 01:00 2.8.43	40	9	-	1	6	56	18	6	80
Total	63	24	6	2	14	109	34	16	159

It is unlikely that any record dealing with large numbers of AFV is going to be 100% accurate as the odd AFV may well have been reclassified at some point. But there is little doubt

³²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1-2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1-10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5-18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH 1a, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T 1a 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *2 SS-T Pak SF lost sometime between 11.7.43 and end of Mius operation.

³³Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187-88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7-2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports for SS-T 18-20.7.43 T314, R1171, F000388-482.

³⁴AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *2 Pz III lg listed under Bef.

³⁵AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7-2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982.

the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* brings us as close as is realistically possible to obtaining a definitive account of the II SS Panzer Korps AFV losses during Operation Citadel, and with it the maximum number of German AFV losses that could have occurred during the battle of Prokhorovka.

On the day of the *Wochenmeldung* (1.8.1943) DR and SS-T were in the midst of a counter-offensive, launched on 30.7.1943, which aimed to crush the Soviet Mius bridgehead which in turn was centred on Dmitrijevka.³⁶ The bridgehead had been created following the Red Army's diversionary offensive that had begun on 17.7.1943. The Soviet offensive had been designed to lure the strongest German armoured formations away from the Kharkov area prior to the major Soviet summer offensive in that sector (Operation Rumyantsev) which was to be launched on 3.8.43. This tactic proved entirely successful when the II SS Panzer Korps (now including the 3rd Panzer division as a replacement for the departing LSSAH) arrived on the Mius front (Figure 4).³⁷

The *Wochenmeldung* alone provides us with the opportunity to establish the exact number of fully-tracked AVF (bar Pz I, self-propelled tank destroyers, artillery and heavy infantry guns) in the inventories of DR and SS-T directly after their participation in Operation Citadel (5–16 July 1943) and its immediate aftermath (17–20.7.43).³⁸ From other sources we know the number of new deliveries of AFV the units of II SS Panzer Korps received at the front between the launch of Operation Citadel on 5.7.43 and the end of July. Therefore we can adjust the *Wochenmeldung* inventories accordingly to reflect the actual inventories of the SS divisions at the conclusion of Operation Citadel. The only new AFV despatched to the II SS Pz Korps were 5 Pz VI Tiger tanks which were received by the LSSAH on 25.7.43 (on 28.7.43 one of these new LSSAH Tigers was transferred to DR, while the other four were transferred to SS-T) and 4 Sf Pak which reached the LSSAH frontline sometime after 10.7.43. Having only departed Germany on 6.7.43 it is highly debatable whether these 4 new Sf Pak reached the LSSAH frontline troops prior to the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43 (See Table 9 to 11).³⁹

As the 1.8.43 *Wochenmeldung* is in reality a 'ten-day' status report for the armoured units of 6th Army the report also includes the origin and number of new AFV deliveries that had been received by each unit between 21.7–1.8.43 (in a similar way to the divisional 'ten-

³⁶II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050-51.

³⁷Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 143–44; see also Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Swing of the Pendulum: The Withdrawal of the Eastern Front from Summer 1943 to Summer 1944" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017), 338–43.

³⁸AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

³⁹Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. Regarding the transfer of LSSAH Tigers see Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 36–37. As early as 29.6.43 the LSSAH daily AFV reports seem to contradict the more detailed LSSAH 1.7.43 inventory and 1.7.43 & 10.7.43 ten day AFV status reports by recording operational numbers above the 21 Sf Pak 75 mm in the division's inventory, seemingly indicating the presence of 4 new Sf Pak. However, it is likely the LSSAH daily AFV reports are including Sf Pak which, although already issued to LSSAH (on 10.6.43), had not yet reached the troops on the frontline – or even left Germany (they departed 6.7.43)! Neither the 1.7.43 nor 10.7.43 ten day status reports record any new Sf Pak arriving at the front (the latter does include 16 new Pz IV), instead an inventory of 21 and 19 Sf Pak is respectively recorded. See PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390 and II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH daily AFV reports 29.6–10.7.43, T354, R605, F000401-636.

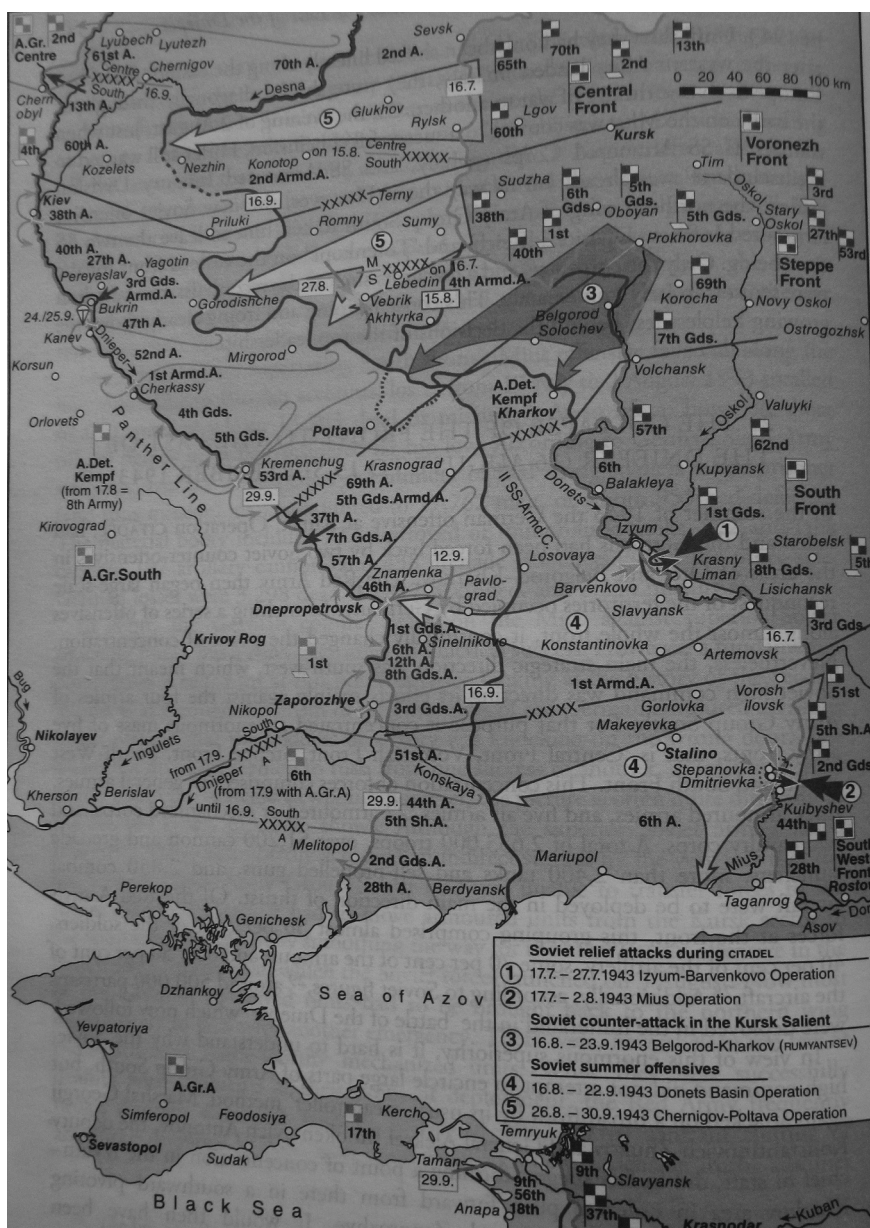


Figure 4. Army group south's withdrawal operations to the Dnieper (17 July to 29 September 1943), source: map IV.III.1., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Table 9. LSSAH new AFV deliveries July – October 1943.⁴⁰

-	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf
July	16 (pre Citadel)	71 (joined LSSAH in Italy)	5 for LSSAH & 27 for 1 SS Pz Korps (latter joined LSSAH in Italy)	-	4 (mid July)
August	53	-	-	9 StuH	6
September	-	-	-	-	-
October	29	96 (Full exchange for unreliable 71 above)	-	-	-

Table 10. Das Reich new AFV deliveries July – October 1943.⁴¹

-	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf
July	-	71 (entered combat with DR 22 Aug)	-	-	-
August	10 (mid Aug)	-	-	-	-
September	-	3 (recovery Panthers)	5 (did not arrive)	-	-
October	10 (early October did not reach front by 5.10.43)	-	-	-	-

Table 11. Totenkopf new AFV deliveries July – October 1943.⁴²

-	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf
July	-	-	-	-	-
August	-	-	-	-	-
September	-	-	-	-	-
October	5 (early October did not reach front by 5.10.43) & 5 (mid-late Oct)	-	5 (either the re-routed DR shipment or 5 assigned to AGS) reached front by 5.10.43	-	-

day' status reports). The *Wochenmeldung* therefore once again confirms that on 28.7.43 the LSSAH transferred the majority of its panzers to DR (4 Pz III, 39 Pz IV, 9 Pz VI) and SS-T (4 Pz III, 30 Pz IV, 8 Pz VI).⁴³ We also have alternative documentary evidence that states the LSSAH passed a further 3 Pz III to the II SS Pz Korps HQ and retained 2 Pz I, 4 Pz II, 1 Pz III & 5 Pz IV as well as all its StuG assault guns and Sf Pak tank destroyers when it began its transfer to Italy on 29.7.1943.⁴⁴ Neither DR nor SS-T received any other new AFV in July 1943.⁴⁵ The result of the LSSAH additions to DR and SS-T inventories are as follows:

⁴⁰Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43 & 1.10.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

⁴¹Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 31.10.43, T313, R391.

⁴²Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

⁴³AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

⁴⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; Images of the tanks retained by the LSSAH can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html>; Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, p.136; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 5 LSSAH Tigers, 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns and August delivery report for 53 LSSAH Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391.

⁴⁵See delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

on 29.7.43 DR had 182 panzers and SS-T had 174 panzers.⁴⁶ If we include assault guns and tank destroyers DR had a 226 AFV while SS-T had between 217–219 AFV.⁴⁷

Panzer, Assault Gun and Tank Destroyer Losses

As the *Wochenmeldung* lists the number of AFV declared to be total losses between 21.7–1.8.43 per unit, per type, it indicates the intensity of the fighting during the first few days of the Mius counter-offensive and in particular the battle for possession of the key Hill 213.9, which was finally captured on 1.8.1943 after a three day battle.⁴⁸ The inclusion of the TF allows us to retrospectively add these losses back to the 1.8.43 DR and SS-T inventories in order to further establish both divisions' inventory on 29.7.43, the day prior to the 30.7.43 launch of the Mius counter-offensive. If we then subtract the recent LSSAH additions to DR and SS-T we are presented with the final inventories of DR and SS-T following their deployment in the Belgorod/Prokhorovka area (Operation Citadel and its aftermath – DR 5–17.7.43 and SS-T 5–20.7.1943). Most significantly these figures match the number of panzers shown by *Wochenmeldung* as being in DR and SS-T inventories on 20.7.43 which is 130 and 132 AFV respectively. Clearly this further validates the 20.7.43 DR and SS-T inventory figures. When we compare the information in the *Wochenmeldung* with the 1–2.7.43 pre-Citadel inventories of the three SS divisions and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report which covered losses of the korps in the Belgorod area between 5–18.7.1943 (updated with information received to 22.7.43) then we can see that in relation to SS-T the results are particularly illuminating.⁴⁹

If we subtract from the 4.7.43 pre-Operation Citadel LSSAH inventory (118 Pz – not including light panzers) the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's reported panzer losses (1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV (2 of which were Homeland Maintenance), 1 Pz VI (Homeland Maintenance), 118–11 = 107), the panzers passed to the II SS Panzer Korps HQ (3 Pz III, 107–3 = 104) and the small number of panzers that we know were retained by the LSSAH (1 Pz III, 5 Pz IV, 9 Bef, 104–15 = 89) then we are presented with the same number of panzers the *Wochenmeldung* declares the LSSAH handed over to DR and SS-T (8 Pz III, 69 Pz IV & 12 Pz VI = 89, not including the 5 new Pz VI the LSSAH received on 25.7.43).⁵⁰ This therefore

⁴⁶AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

⁴⁷AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (writen 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390.

⁴⁸AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 30.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000123-41.

⁴⁹AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (writen 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH writen 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen writen 23.7.43) T313, R390.

⁵⁰AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH writen 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen writen 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (writen 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 &

proves that the II SS Pz Korps engineer report gave the correct number of LSSAH losses for the period 5.7–18.7.43. However, some specific panzer ‘losses’ were ultimately replaced in the records, like for like, by a panzer of the same type. In practice this meant an additional tank being written off (either 3a or 3.b) while another which was at first considered a write off either physically or administratively returned to service. The author’s previous article showed AFV reclassifications were a fairly regular occurrence. For example, during Operation Citadel this occurred with LSSAH Pz III 77 604, and potentially with a LSSAH Pz VI – the ‘replacement’ loss for the latter stemming from the battle of Prokhorovka.⁵¹

In regards to the LSSAH assault guns the 1.9.43 divisional *Meldung* states that the LSSAH still had 32 StuG on hand which correctly matches the 3 total losses reported by the II SS Panzer Korps engineer. The LSSAH began Operation Citadel with 35 StuG.⁵² In terms of tank destroyers we know from the daily operational strength report of 24.7.43 that the LSSAH had all of its 22 Sf Pak operational, including the 4 new Sf Pak additions. This therefore confirms that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer correctly listed 3 Sf Pak as losses, 2 as a total loss and 1 in need of Homeland Maintenance repair (3.a). The LSSAH began Operation Citadel with 21 Sf Pak in its inventory.⁵³

The total number of panzers that the 6th Army’s *Wochenmeldung* stated Das Reich held in its inventory on 20.7.43 was 130, while on 1.8.43 the report declared that 182 panzers were with DR (the latter after retrospective addition of the 10 losses that appear in *Wochenmeldung*; these losses occurred between 30.7–1.8.43 during the Mius offensive, $172 + 10 = 182$). These figures match per tank type the 20.7.43 *Wochenmeldung* panzer inventory for DR (130, which was also DR final inventory following Operation Citadel) after we remove from the updated 1.8.43 figure the recent 28.7.43 LSSAH additions ($182 - 52 = 130$, 2 Pz III Ig had been included, either in error or by design, alongside the division’s Bef Pz III).⁵⁴ While if we remove the II SS Panzer Korps engineer reported losses and the 3 T-34 losses (together 12 total losses) from Das Reich’s pre-Operation Citadel 142 strong panzer inventory ($142 - 12 = 130$) this also gives us the *Wochenmeldung* 20.7.43 panzer inventory of 130.⁵⁵ These calculations mutually corroborate in respect to DR panzer

668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH Ia, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; Images of the tanks retained by the LSSAH can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html>; Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, p.136; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 5 LSSAH Tigers, 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns and August delivery report for 53 LSSAH Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391.

⁵¹ See examples in Ben Wheatley, “Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944,” *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 14–16, 8–10 and article’s appendix.

⁵² Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390.

⁵³ II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH Ia, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; See June 1943 delivery report for 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns on Sturmpanzer website; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (written 12.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390. In relation to the arrival date of 4 new Sf Pak see footnote 37 above. It can reasonably be expected that the 4 new Sf Pak which left Germany on 6.7.43 would have reached the LSSAH troops by 24.7.43.

⁵⁴ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

⁵⁵ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz.

inventory (per tank type) all elements of the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's reported losses.

By following the same formula we can see that the *Wochenmeldung* and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer report are also in alignment in respect to DR's assault gun strength on 20.7.43 and 1.8.43 (both 32). Das Reich began Operation Citadel with 34 StuG while the II SS Panzer Korps engineer reported 2 StuG losses.⁵⁶ Although the *Wochenmeldung* did not record tank destroyer strengths we know that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer report was also correct to declare that DR suffered no Sf Pak losses during Operation Citadel. We know this as on 11.8.43 the division reported that all 12 of its Sf Pak were operational – no new Sf Pak were issued prior to this date.⁵⁷

Therefore we can say with confidence that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer losses report is accurate in terms the number of declared AFV losses for both the LSSAH and DR for the period 5–18.7.43. The LSSAH and Das Reich along with the II SS Panzer Korps HQ withdrew from the front on 17.7.43. Given that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer report covered AFV reclassifications up to 22.7.43 this must have given adequate time for an accurate report to be filed in regards to these two divisions (though of course as already mentioned like for like reclassifications in the report still occurred).

The *Wochenmeldung* also provides the first accurate account of the number of losses sustained by DR T-34's during Operation Citadel. DR began Operation Citadel with 24 T-34 in its inventory. The use of T-34 (reportedly obtained from a factory in Kharkov) by DR was a stop gap measure prior to the arrival of Das Reich's Panther battalion (the Panthers entered combat west of Kharkov on 22 August 1943). The T-34's were used extensively in the Mius counter attack. We know that DR lost 2 T-34 prior to the 11.7.43 as these appear in the 5–10.7.43 DR and SS-T total loss report (Figure 5). The II SS Panzer Korps engineer loss report did not record DR's T-34 losses. However, the fact that the 1.8.43 *Wochenmeldung* states DR had an inventory of 21, indicates that 1 further T-34 was lost between 11–20.7.43.⁵⁸ Each of DR T-34 had undergone fairly extensive reconditioning prior to Operation Citadel. For example they were converted to carry a two-way radio. Therefore it is extremely doubtful that DR had the time to adapt any further T-34 as replacements during this period as the repair troops would have had other priorities.⁵⁹

What is perhaps most interesting about the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* is that unlike the LSSAH & DR elements of the report those regarding SS-T for 20.7.43 and 1.8.43 (again including the 30.7–1.8.43 Mius offensive losses) do not align with the II SS Panzer

1–10.7.43 (DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43 (DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201.

⁵⁸AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, *Wochenmeldung* über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43 (DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, see T-34 amongst DR vanguard units for Mius counter-offensive, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000888-89; Forczyk, Robert, *Panther vs T-34: Ukraine 1943* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing 2007), 24–25 & 61–63.

⁵⁹Chamberlain, Peter, and Doyle, Hilary, *Encyclopaedia of German Tanks of World War Two* (London: Arms & Armour 2001), 238–39.

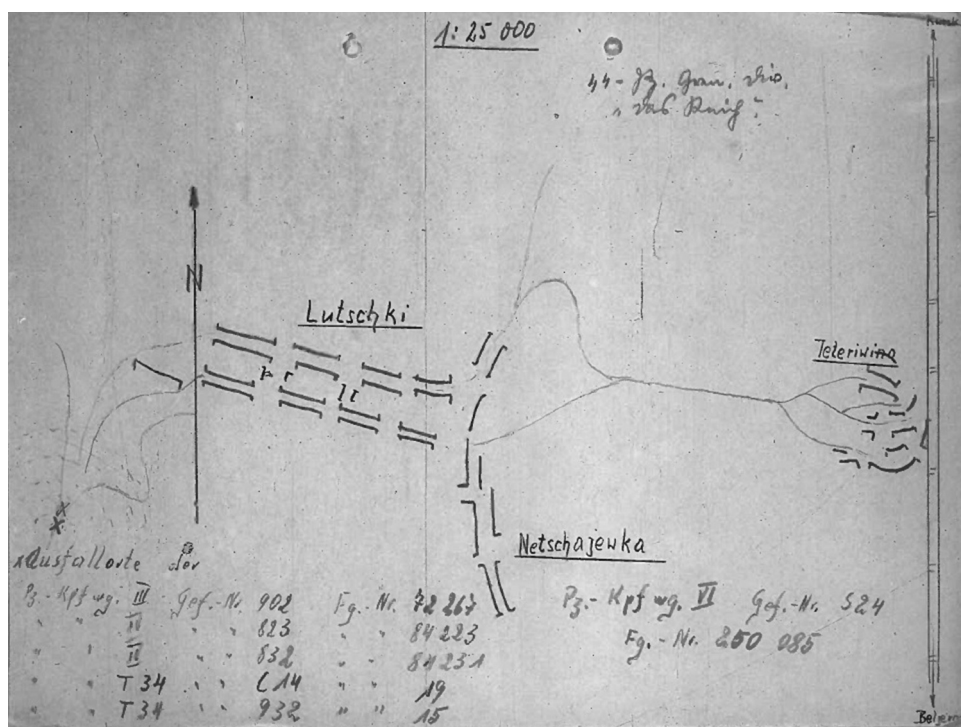


Figure 5. Extract showing majority of DR panzer losses 5–10.7.43: PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, Lageskizzen written 23.7.43, T313, R390 DR other AFV loss during this period Pz III 73 102 can be found on a separate page.

Korps engineer report after the latter's reported losses have been subtracted from SS-T's pre-Operation Citadel inventory. The SS-T *Wochenmeldung* status for 20.7.43 and 1.8.43 tell us that, when compared with the 5–10.7.43 SS-T total loss report, SS-T in fact lost no panzers between 11–20.7.43 – a quite remarkable revelation.⁶⁰

The total number of panzers the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* declared SS-T possessed on 1.8.43 was 174 (after the retrospective addition of the 15 Mius offensive losses of 30.7–1.8.43, 159 + 15 = 174). After the removal of the recent 42 LSSAH additions from this figure (174–42 = 132) we are given the number of panzers shown as being in the *Wochenmeldung* SS-T inventory on 20.7.43 which was 132. The II SS Panzer Korps engineer reported a total of 12 SS-T panzers as being lost between 5–18.7.43, while SS-T pre-Operation Citadel panzer inventory stood at 139. However, when we subtract 12 tanks from the pre-Operation Citadel inventory of 139 (139–12 = 127) we can see that there is a five tank deficit between the 132 panzer inventory total reported in the 20.7.43 *Wochenmeldung*. The 5–10.7.43 DR and SS-T loss report and the 1–10.7.43 SS-T ten day status report both confirm that SS-T lost 7 panzers in the early part of Operation Citadel, which meant SS-T

⁶⁰ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43 (DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 2.7.43, T313, R390.

closed 10.7.43 with a panzer inventory of 132, which is of course the same total reported by the 20.7.43 *Wochenmeldung* status report (Table 12 and Figure 6).⁶¹

Table 12. Reported total losses of II SS Panzer Korps during operation Citadel 5–10.7.43.⁶²

-	Pz I	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	StuG	Sf Pak
LSSAH	15 014	77 604	84 088 83 291 83 181 83 293			92 150 91 143	1 851 1 821
Das Reich		73 102 (514) 72 267 (902)	84 223 (823) 84 231 (832)	19 (L14) 15 (932)	250 085 (S24)		
Totenkopf		77 603 74 996 (302)	84 245 (323) 84 232 (711) 84 227 (713) 82 877 (222)		250 095	92 247	

The *Wochenmeldung* SS-T status of 20.7.43 cannot in fact be a delayed (or duplicated) reporting of SS-T's earlier 10.7.43 status report as quite obviously the distribution of panzers in the 1.8.43 status would also be in error. The distribution of panzers on 1.8.43 into categories of operational, short-term damaged, long-term damaged, new and lost panzers has clearly been undertaken in great detail. This information could only have been offered on or after the 1.8.43. The fact that the 1.8.43 SS-T panzer status can then be traced back accurately to 20.7.43 by removing the various losses and new additions between those dates proves that the 20.7.43 *Wochenmeldung* figure for SS-T is indeed factual.⁶³

The fact that the LSSAH and DR elements of the *Wochenmeldung* and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer report are in alignment gives us confidence that the *Wochenmeldung* is overall an accurate document. The *Wochenmeldung* status report for 1.8.43 reported that total losses in the first three days (by far the most intense period) of the four day battle on the Mius were as follows: for Das Reich 4 Pz III and 6 Pz IV. The DR Pz III figure is unclear in the original document – but this has been substantiated by removing the clearly stated 6 Pz IV losses from the 29.7.43 DR panzer inventory total of 182 (182–6 = 176) which means 4 Pz III must have also been lost in order for the confirmed 1.8.43 panzer inventory total of 172 to be met. Totenkopf lost: 4 Pz III lg, 9 Pz IV lg and 2 Pz IV kz. Clearly the short Mius offensive was proving very costly for both of the SS divisions.⁶⁴ The intensity of the fighting on the first day of the battle for Hill 213.9 is highlighted by a 23:30 30.7.43 II SS Panzer Korps loss report that stated that DR suffered 25 panzers lost or damaged, whilst the same report declared SS-T had suffered as many as 48 panzers (including 8 Tigers) and 12 StuG lost or damaged (Figure 7 to 10).⁶⁵

Given the high number of AFV casualties SS-T had suffered between 30.7–1.8.43 and the knowledge that SS-T had not engaged in any serious fighting between 19–29.7.43 one has to conclude that all of SS-T 21.7–1.8.43 reported losses must have occurred following the commencement of the Mius offensive on 30.7.43 and were not late additions from the

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

⁶⁵II SS Panzer Korps, Meldung über Verluste, durchgegeben am 30.7, 23,30 Uhr, Fernmündl. An O 1 AOK.6,T354, R605, F000940.

Bikoststoffzusatzung mit Baumfortschrittszahl nimm											
Pz. III	Pz. IV	Pz. V	Pz. VI	Pz. VII	Pz. VIII	Pz. IX	Pz. X	Pz. XI	Pz. XII	Pz. XIII	Pz. XIV
ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 60	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 43	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 24	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 15	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 8	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 4	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 2	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 1	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 0.5	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 0.25	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 0.125	ohne Anbau f. mit 5 cm K.h. L. 0.0625
1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11
12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18
19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22	22
23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23	23
24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26	26
27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29	29
30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31	31
32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32	32
33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36	36
37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39
40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40
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42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43	43
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96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96
97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97	97
98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98	98
99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99	99
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Figure 6. PZAK 4, OQu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-10.7.43, T313, R390.



Figure 7. SS-T assault on Hill 213.9, 30.7.43. II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050-51.

Citadel era. SS-T losses during the Mius offensive were greater than DR due to the fact that SS-T conducted a costly frontal assault on the extremely well fortified and defended Hill 213.9, Das Reich was attempting to outflank the hill from the south and as a result avoided the worst fighting.⁶⁶

⁶⁶AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Meldung über Verluste, durchgegeben am 30.7, 23,30 Uhr, Fernmündl. An O 1 AOK..6, T354, R605, F000940; II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000104–41; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050-51; II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 31.7.43, T354, R606, F000052-53; II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 1.8.43, T354, R606, F000055-56; II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 2.8.43, T354, R606, F000059.



Figure 8. SS-T assault on Hill 213.9, 31.7.43. II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 31.7.43, T354, R606, F000052-53.

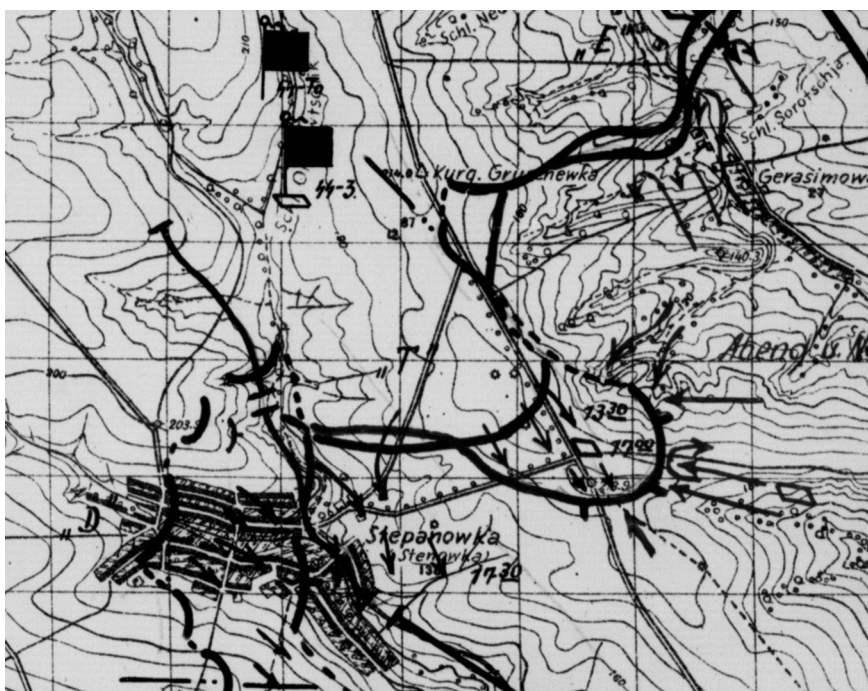


Figure 9. SS-T capture of Hill 213.9, 1.8.43. II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 1.8.43, T354, R606, F000055-56.



Figure 10. SS-T advance to the Mius, 2.8.43. II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 2.8.43, T354, R606, F000059.

Supporting evidence

We shall now explore a number of factors that help us understand why there is a discrepancy between the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's reported panzer losses for SS-T and the post-Citadel inventories for 20.7.43 and 1.8.43 for the same division that can be found in the 6th Army's *Wochenmeldung*.⁶⁷

On 17.7.43 the II SS Panzer Korps HQ (along with the korps engineer), the LSSAH and DR disengaged from the front. On 18.7.43 (Figure 11 and 12) these units then began travelling to 1st Panzer Army sector in order to prepare to face the forming Soviet bridgehead on the Donets. As a result SS-T was from 18.7.43 no longer under the II SS Panzer Korps control. Instead SS-T fought further defensive battles until 20.7.43 under the control of XXXXVIII Panzer Korps on which date it also disengaged and began to be transported south to 6th Army's sector – where it would rejoin the II SS Panzer Korps prior to the Mius attack. As a result from 18.7.43 there was a physical separation between II SS Panzer Korps engineer and SS-T that simply did not exist between II SS Panzer Korps engineer and the LSSAH & DR. This may have had a bearing on the ability of II SS Panzer Korps engineer to source up to date and accurate information regarding SS-T AFV losses. Although the II SS Panzer Korps engineer made amendments to his report until 22.7.43 this is unlikely to have improved matters in regards to SS-T as by this stage all three divisions & the II SS Panzer Korps HQ were in the midst of a transport either to 1st Panzer Army on the Donets (HQ, LSSAH & DR) or 6th Army on the Mius (SS-T).⁶⁸

⁶⁷ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31.

⁶⁸ II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 17.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000100-41; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports relating to Totenkopf 18–20.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388-482; II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 18–22.7.43, T354, R606, F000038; II SS Panzer Korps, Gliederung des II SS Panzer Korps am 22 und 23.7.43 bis zur

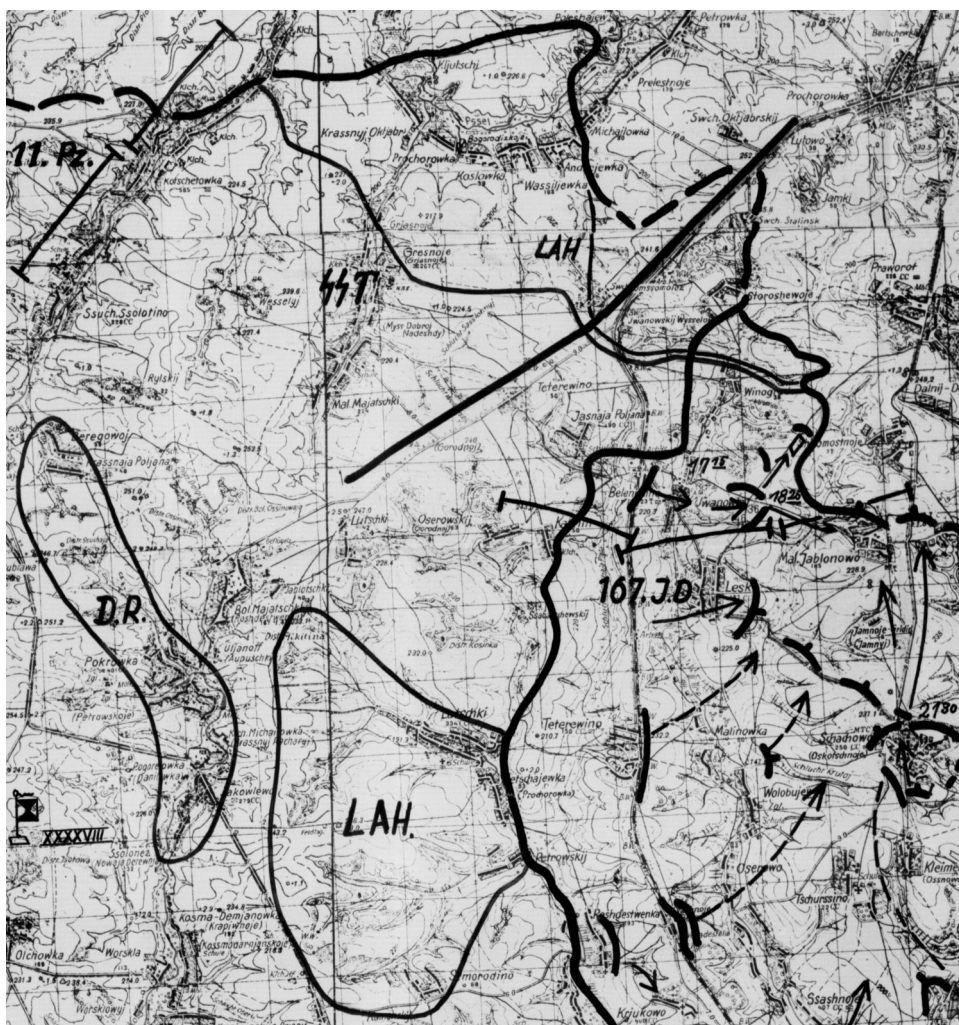


Figure 11. II SS Panzer Korps, map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035.

The 18.7.43 was the final day that SS-T's panzer regiment was engaged in any major defensive operations. On 19.7.43 it may have been called upon to repel a minor attack of 15 Soviet tanks (apparently 8 Soviet tanks were destroyed), while on 20.7.43 SS-T's Panzer Regiment did not engage in any action prior to its departure from 4th Panzer Army control at 21:00 that night. Therefore SS-T AFV losses between 19–20.7.43 are extremely unlikely to have occurred. As SS-T compiled its own status reports, the division would have had plenty of time to source and report correct AFV information

Bereitstellung und Lage bei XXXX.A.K., T354, R606, F000039; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellungs u. Angriffsplan für den Angriff am 24.7.43, T354, R606, F000040; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050-51; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31.

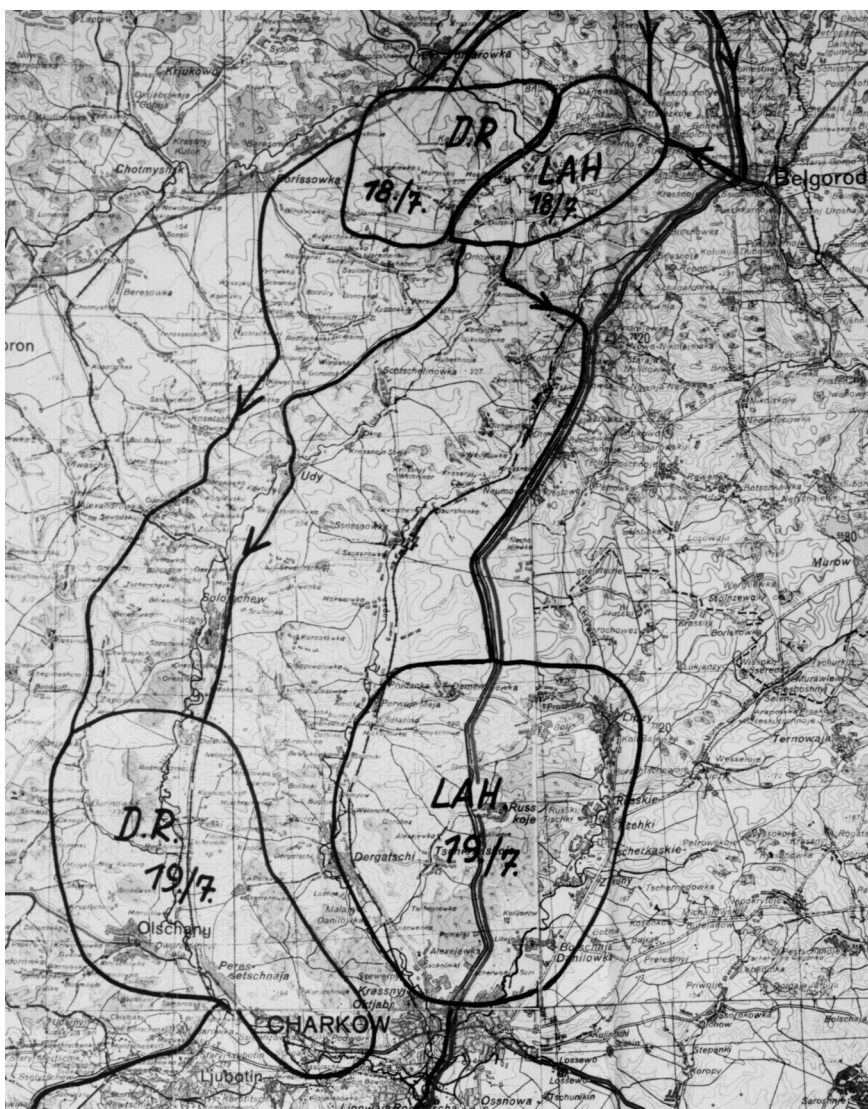


Figure 12. II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 18–22.7.43, T354, R606, F000038.

to its controlling corps (XXXXVIII Panzer Korps) and army (4th Panzer Army) prior to the 20.7.43 status report being issued. However, at this stage we cannot say for sure which controlling staff actually issued the original 20.7.43 status report. As already mentioned SS-T left XXXXVIII Panzer Korps and 4th Panzer Army control on the evening 20.7.43 to begin its transfer south to the Mius. Therefore we are extremely fortunate that the 20.7.43 status for SS-T is included in the 1.8.43 6th Army *Wochenmeldung*.⁶⁹

⁶⁹Ibid.

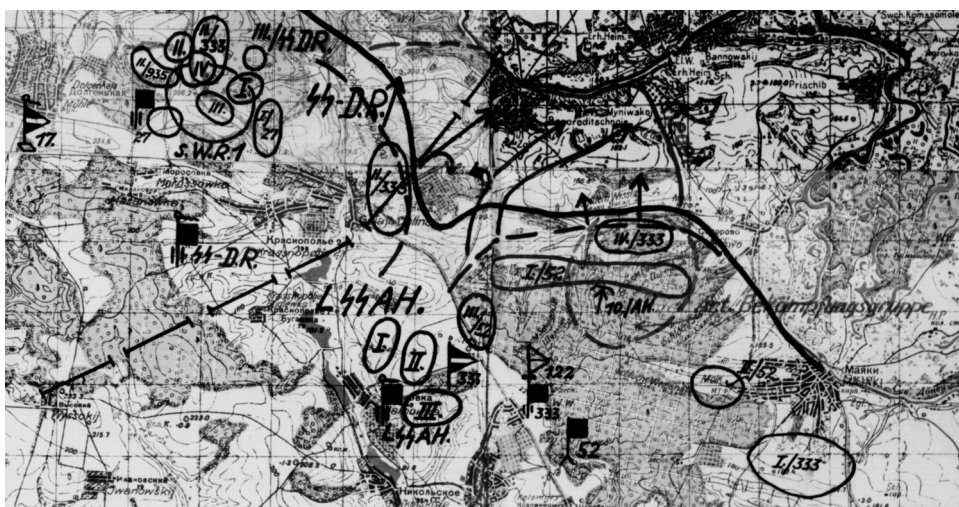


Figure 13. LSSAH and DR plan of attack with 1st Panzer Army, 24.7.43. II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellungs u. Angriffsplan für den Angriff am 24.7.43, T354, R606, F000040.

In the event on 24.7.43 Hitler cancelled the 1st Panzer Army's Donets operation at the last moment with the LSSAH and DR already in their assembly areas for the offensive (Figure 13 the Soviet bridgehead had been contained prior to the LSSAH and DR arrival). Both divisions then continued south to 6th Army's sector arriving on 25–26.7.43. Totenkopf due to transportation delays did not arrive with 6th Army until 26–27.7.43 (Figure 14). Therefore the physical separation between SS-T and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer stretched between 18–26.7.43. The various transports which took place over this period would have hardly aided the II SS Panzer Korps HQ's effective evaluation of SS-T AFV status. It seems a real possibility that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer, due to his remoteness from SS-T, was out of touch with the real situation on the ground in regards to SS-T AFV losses in the latter stages of Operation Citadel and the offensive's immediate aftermath.⁷⁰

The II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report makes clear that some of SS-T tanks (1 Pz III & 1 Pz IV) which were initially recorded as total losses had in fact already been recovered and repaired. This obviously sets a precedent for errors in the reporting of SS-T AFV losses in the report; perhaps pertinently no such errors were reported by the engineer in regards to the LSSAH or DR losses. As the author's previous article made clear AFV damage/loss classifications were in a constant state of flux. There were many examples of panzers initially being reported as total losses (3b) only to be later reclassified as needing factory repair (3a) or even rapidly returning to service. There are also instances of tanks despite being listed as TF or requiring factory repair remaining in divisional inventories. Therefore no loss report should ever be considered to be 100% accurate. However, it is unlikely that as many as 5 SS-T panzers were reclassified from lost to damaged or operational over this period. Single adjustments were commonplace but relatively large post-battle adjustments

⁷⁰Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Swing of the Pendulum: The Withdrawal of the Eastern Front from Summer 1943 to Summer 1944" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 339–41; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellungs u. Angriffsplan für den Angriff am 24.7.43, T354, R606, F000040; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043.

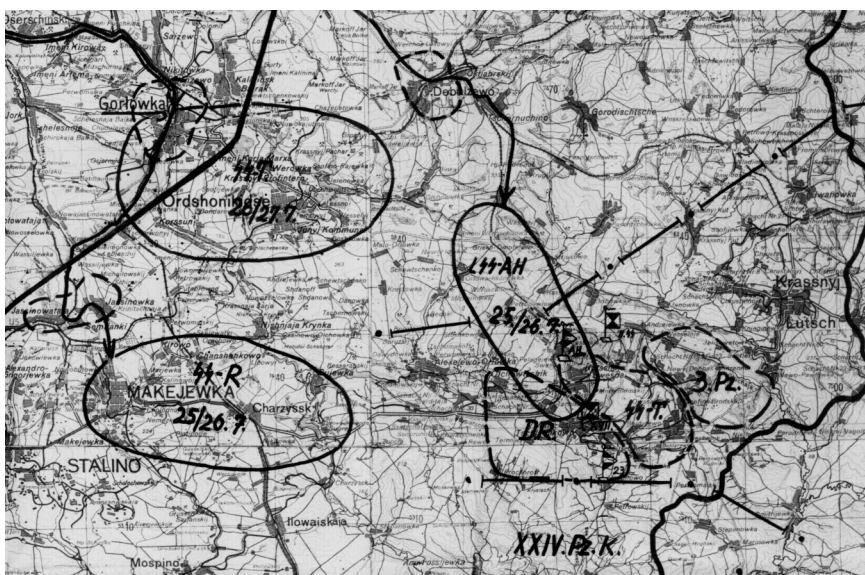


Figure 14. II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043.

are unlikely to have occurred. It is more likely the report was simply incorrect regarding SS-T losses. It is also possible that having left the front on 17–18.7.43 the II SS Panzer Korps engineer was lacking a direct report from SS-T in regards to SS-T AFV losses and was forced to work with outdated or erroneous information.⁷¹

Another indicator that points to the greater accuracy of the *Wochenmeldung* over the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's loss report (in regards to SS-T AFV losses) can be seen when one compares the 5–10.7.43 total loss (chassis numbers) report for DR & SS-T (that the II SS Panzer Korps supplied to 4th Panzer Army) with the divisional losses reported by Army Group South to the General Inspector of Panzer Troops' Office for the same period.⁷²

In terms of the *number* (a couple of panzers chassis numbers are incorrectly listed) of AFV reported in the combined 5–10.7.43 DR & SS-T total loss report over this period, the figures for DR match the known sources, meaning it is likely that this document is also correct for SS-T. Therefore we can say with relative confidence that SS-T lost 2 Pz III, 4 Pz IV and 1 Pz VI between 5–10.7.43. As we have seen this would mean that according to the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* SS-T lost no further panzers after the 10.7.1943 during

⁷¹II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F00044; See examples reclassifications in Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 14–16, 8–10 and article's appendix.

⁷²II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F00044; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, 5–10.7.43 Totalverluste, see also: 5–13.7.43, 5–14.7.43, 5–15.7.43, 5–16.7.43 and 5–17.7.43 editions.

Operation Citadel. This is despite the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report alluding to a further loss of 3 Pz III and 2 Pz IV.⁷³

There are also a few indicators that support the belief that no SS-T post-10.7.1943 total losses occurred during Operation Citadel. Firstly the 5–17.7.43 Army Group South loss report that was sent to the General Inspector of Panzer Troops Office lists only 2 Pz III as being lost by SS-T throughout Operation Citadel. Secondly, although the same 5–17.7.43 Army Group South loss report lists 8 Pz IV losses, they are all recorded in the in Army Group South's 5–10.7.43 edition (Table 13). Therefore, although the number of losses in 5–10.7.43 Army Group South loss report may not be in alignment with the 5–10.7.43 DR & SS-T (chassis number) total loss report. The clear implication is that no SS-T losses occurred after 10.7.43. This perhaps indicates the true chronology of SS-T losses i.e. they all occurred between 5–10.7.43.⁷⁴ We also know that SS-T withdrew in good order from its bridgehead across the river Psel on the night of 17–18.7.43 (for example the division even had time to deconstruct its bridging equipment) so perhaps some of the panzers which the II SS Panzer Korps engineer believed were total losses on the far side of the Psel were in fact recovered and remained in SS-T inventory beyond 20.7.43.⁷⁵

The confirmed knowledge that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report concerning SS-T AFV losses in the latter half of the Operation Citadel (post-10.7.43) is inaccurate further raises the possibility that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer had not yet recorded a LSSAH Tiger tank as a total loss following the battle of Prokhorovka. A LSSAH Tiger tank was said to have been immobilised close to SS-T troops during the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43. Any immobilised LSSAH Tiger would have remained close to SS-T's frontage after 12.7.43 until SS-T withdrew from the area on the night of 18/19.7.43. We know roughly the location of the 4 operational LSSAH Tigers on 12.7.43 as the tanks had to crest a hill in order to bring the known Soviet tank wrecks near Andreyevka into their line of fire – this was the LSSAH Tiger tanks' second battle of the day. The II SS Panzer Korps engineer would have been just as susceptible to the same lack of clarity as to the ultimate fate of an LSSAH 'Prokhorovka' Tiger tank located in SS-T's sector of operations as he would have been with panzers that belonged to SS-T. It is also very possible that the LSSAH Tiger tank that the II SS Panzer Korps engineer reported as

Table 13. General Inspector of the Panzer Troops- Totalverluste – Army group south – operation Citadel – 5-17.7.43.⁷⁶

-	LSSAH			DR			SS-T		
	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI
5-10.7.43	1	5	1		1			8	1
5-13.7.43	1	7	1	1	1		2	8	1
5-14.7.43	1	9	1	1	1		2	8	1
5-15.7.43	1	9	1	1	6	1	2	8	1
5-16.7.43	1	9	1	1	6	1	2	8	1
5-17.7.43	1	9	1	1	6	1	2	8	1
Final Total	1	9	1	1	6	1	2	8	1

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 17–19.7.43, T354, R605, F000100-110; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports relating to Totenkopf 18–20.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388-482.

⁷⁶Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, 5–10.7.43 Totalverluste, see also: 5–13.7.43, 5–14.7.43, 5–15.7.43, 5–16.7.43 and 5–17.7.43 editions.

requiring homeland maintenance (see also LSSAH 1–10.7.43 ten day status report in [Figure 17](#).) remained against regulations in the LSSAH inventory (we know for example that a SS-T Tiger took a similar path in the spring of 1943) and was transferred in its current state of repair to DR or SS-T's inventory on 28.7.43. On 28.7.43 DR received 8 Citadel era LSSAH Tigers (& 1 new), while SS-T took on 4 Citadel era LSSAH Tigers (& 4 new).⁷⁷

The issue of units refusing to turn over heavily damaged AFV (for fear of receiving no replacement) to homeland maintenance became so acute that ultimately an order had to be issued that stipulated that AFV requiring homeland maintenance would officially be allowed to remain the property of their parent division. On 21.10.43 OKH/GenStdH/GenQu/Abt.III stated: 'The armoured vehicles sent to the homeland for maintenance henceforth remain property of the delivering troop outfit and will be returned to it after maintenance has been carried out.'⁷⁸ As we have seen with the example of SS-T in the spring of 1943 (at least in regards to SS Tigers) this practice was already taking place.

The II SS Panzer Korps engineer report also declared that SS-T lost 2 Sf Pak as total losses. We are still not in a position to confirm whether two Sf Pak were lost during the latter part of operation Citadel (11–18.7.43) or later on the Mius front. However, a shortage report after the Mius offensive, which declared how far below establishment SS-T was, stated that the division was short of 1 Sf Pak. Given that official establishment (*Soll*) was 10 Sf Pak, we can see that SS-T must have ended the Mius battle with 9 Sf Pak (SS-T began Citadel with 11 Sf Pak). One of 9 Sf Pak was under long-term repair. We know this as the divisional *Meldung* and OB chart for 1.8.43 declared that 8 Sf Pak were available to the division (in this case operational or under 3 weeks repair – the OB chart did not list SS-T panzer strengths). The II SS Panzer Korps engineer report does correctly state that SS-T lost 1 StuG during this period (recorded as occurring between 5–10.7.43) which tallies with the inventory of 34 shown in the 1.8.43 *Wochenmeldung*.⁷⁹

The daily divisional reports during the Mius offensive list SS-T as having only a limited number of operational Pz III. On 1.8.43 this number was as low as 5, whereas on the same date the *Wochenmeldung* lists 40 Pz III as being operational (albeit listed in error as Pz III 75 mm kz – SS-T only possessed Pz III with long barrelled 50 mm weapons). The most likely reason for the large difference in the number of operational Pz III in the reports is that only a proportion were committed to the battle area. The daily divisional report for 28.7.43 declared that SS-T had 52 Pz III lg operational, while the declared operational numbers of the other panzer types in the *Wochenmeldung* are in broad alimnt with the daily divisional reports for 1.8.43. No new panzer crews

⁷⁷See section *The Tiger on the Hill – was a LSSAH Tiger lost at Prokhorovka* in Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 24–32.

⁷⁸Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2, Vol 2*. (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2011), 235.

⁷⁹AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43* (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.8.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390.

accompanied the transfer of LSSAH armour to DR and SS-T on 28.7.43. Therefore it is probable that a large number of former SS-T Pz III crews were switched to manning the far more potent additional 30 long barrelled Pz IV that had been transferred from the LSSAH. Further evidence that SS-T did in fact have a larger number of operational Pz III than were committed to the Mius offensive can be located in a monthly report of the General Inspector of Panzer Troops which was also issued on 1.8.43. The report declared that SS-T had 49 operational Pz III (including Bef Pz. This report however, did not include AFV in long-term repair – in this case over 3 weeks). There are number of errors in the figures presented in the General Inspector of Panzer Troops' report – for example the report lists SS-T as having 49 StuG operational and 21 StuG under 3 weeks repair, while 10 Pz VI were reported as operational and 18 under 3 weeks repair. However, despite these and other errors the panzer inspector's report does at least provide further evidence that SS-T had not committed a good proportion of its operational Pz III to the Mius battle. Therefore, it seems that the daily SS-T reports during the Mius battle were ignoring the additional operational Pz III in their reports.⁸⁰

A 'lost' counter-offensive at Kharkov – August 1943

Field Marshal Erich von Manstein had been prepared both during and after Operation Citadel to allow the Red Army a free hand in the southern sectors of his army group in return for a concentrated effort during the battle of Kursk. In May 1943 Manstein declared:

in the case of Citadel the decisive factor is the battle for Kursk, and that battle must be fought out even at the risk of a serious crisis in the Donets area. It must therefore be assumed at the outset that the enemy will succeed in making deep breaches in the Army Group's widely stretched front in the sectors of 6th Army and 1st Panzer Army⁸¹

As Karl-Heinz Frieser has succinctly written:

Manstein developed the brilliant idea that the battle on the Mius had to be fought at Kursk. There, by tying down and destroying the largest possible amount of enemy forces, the risk of offensives on other sections of the front could be averted. His idea was to force the Red Army to throw so many tanks into the Kursk caldron that it would be unable to launch its planned summer offensive or would be able to do so only with insufficient forces. That this was by no means absurd is shown by the strikingly high number of Soviet losses. The Soviet colossus was dangerous only if it was able to throw its numerical superiority into the balance – especially its strongest weapon, the artillery – in a properly prepared attack. At Kursk, however, there was a chance of entangling the Soviets armoured units in meeting engagements in which the German tank commanders would be able to exploit their tactical superiority.⁸²

To a great extent this is indeed what occurred, as despite Vatutin's defensive deployment during Operation Citadel, Soviet armour suffered catastrophic losses. The tank units of

⁸⁰AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 218–19; II SS Panzer Corps, Daily report for SS-T, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000886; II SS Panzer Corps, Daily report, 1.8.43, T354, R605, F000970-71.

⁸¹Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 144. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

⁸²Ibid.

6th & 7th Army were largely destroyed in the first two days of the offensive. By 10.7.43 1st Tank Army had shrunk from an original 646 to 100 tanks and assault guns. Up to and including 13.7.43, Voronezh Front (together with reserves brought in) lost a total of 1,223 tanks and assault guns (1,397 tanks and 33 assault guns up to 22.7.43). A large proportion of those losses were incurred in the first few days of the battle. By contrast, up to and including 10.7.43 the attacking units of Army Group South lost only 116 tanks and assault guns in all (175 tanks and assault guns up to 17.7.43), although they had to fight their way through enemy positions under the most adverse conditions.⁸³

As a result following the battle of Prokhorovka Manstein hoped to put this concept further into practice by launching Operation Roland. The operation was intended to shift the main effort of the attack to the north-west away from Prokhorovka (Soviet anti-tank strength and continuing high numbers of operational Soviet tanks prohibited any further attempt to reach Prokhorovka) in the direction of Oboyan. In this way Manstein hoped to inflict even greater losses on the Soviet armoured reserves. If we look at the recovering operational armoured strength of the LSSAH and Das Reich on 18.7.43 (the intended start date of the offensive) then we can see that the German attack would have carried significant force (see Table 15). However, on 13.7.43 to Manstein's dismay Hitler decided to abandon Operational Citadel (the massive Soviet offensive against the Orel salient having begun on 12.7.43), withdraw the II SS Panzer Korps and to dismiss Manstein's proposal for Operation Roland. Hitler wanted to send the II SS Panzer Korps to Italy on a political mission to bolster his Axis partner's faltering resolve to fight. From 17.7.43 Hitler would also be distracted by the economic arguments for protecting the industry in the Donets Basin with the II SS Panzer Korps (See Table 14 to 18).⁸⁴

Table 14. II SS Panzer Korps – pre-operation Roland AFV inventory (ca 18–19.7.43).⁸⁵

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Inventory 01:00 19.7.43 (following Citadel)	12	74		12	9	107	32	22*	161
DR Inventory 01:00 19.7.43 (following Citadel)	60	27	21	13	9	130	32	12	174
SS-T Inventory at 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	61	48		14	9	132	34	9–11#	175–177
Total	133	149	21	39	27	369	98	43–45	510–512

⁸³Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 117 & 150–52.

⁸⁴XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK preparations for Operation Roland 16.7.43, T314, R1171, F000361-63; II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries regarding Operation Roland preparations 17–19.7.43, T354, R605, F000097-102; Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 138–45.

⁸⁵PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *Includes 4 new LSSAH Pak Sf. #*2 Pak Sf lost sometime between 11.7.43 and end of Mius operation.

Table 15. II SS Panzer Korps – pre-operation Roland operational AFV (ca 18–19.7.43).⁸⁶

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational 19:25 18.7.43	7	55		9	8	79	28	16	123
DR Operational 19:25 18.7.43	36	24	17	9	7	93	28	10	131
SS-T Operational 19:25 18.7.43	30	29		7	7	73	20	3	96
Total	73	108	17	25	22	245	76	29	350

Table 16. II SS Panzer Korps – peak operational AFV numbers following operation Citadel.⁸⁷

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational 24.7.43	7	55		10	6	78	30	22	130
DR Operational 18.7.43	36	24	17	9	7	93	28	10	131
SS-T Operational 28.7.43	52	32		5	5	94	26	6*	126*
Total	95	111	17	24	18	265	84	38	387

Table 17. II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory prior to LSSAH transfer and Mius offensive (30.7.43).⁸⁸

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Inventory 27.7.43 (did not participate)	12	74		17	9	112	32	22	166
DR Inventory 27.7.43	60	27	21	13	9	130	32	12	174
SS-T Inventory 27.7.43	61	48		14	9	132	34	9-11*	175-177
Total	133	149	21	44	27	374	98	43-45	515-517

Table 18. II SS Panzer Korps operational AFV prior to LSSAH transfer and Mius offensive (30.7.43).⁸⁹

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH Operational 24.7.43	7	55		10	6	78	30	22	130
DR Operational 28.7.43 (not including LSSAH Pz)	33	17	2	6	3	61	28	11*	100
SS-T Operational 28.7.43 (not including LSSAH Pz)	52	32		5	5	94	26	6#	126#
Total	92	104	2	21	14	233	84	39	356

During the battle of Kursk it would have been to Germany's advantage for Army Group South to retain as many of its panzer units in the Kharkov area throughout the battle, which of course included the defence of Kharkov itself. If loss of territory away from the centre of gravity on the Eastern Front (Kursk/Kharkov) was the inevitable

⁸⁶Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–28.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, Daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388-482.

⁸⁷II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–28.43, T354, R605, F000807-982. *Unlikely to be less than 6 as this number of SS-T Pak Sf was operational on 31.7.43.

⁸⁸PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH Ia, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung und OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *2 Pak SF lost sometime between 11.7.43 and end of Mius operation.

⁸⁹II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–28.43, T354, R605, F000807-982. *Previous day. #Unlikely to be less than 6 as this number of SS-T Pak Sf was operational on 31.7.43.

consequence of this decision, then that should have been a price worth paying.⁹⁰ Despite the cancelation of Operations Citadel and Roland, Hitler should have been able to recognise the absolute necessity of keeping an intact II SS Panzer Korps in the region, in order that it could be immediately deployed in the defence of Kharkov. Instead of sending its divisions to 1st Panzer Army and 6th Army, the German High Command would have been better served allowing the II SS Panzer Korps to rest its troops, repair the majority of its damaged AFV and then become the main armoured reserve of Army Group South in the Kharkov area. By mid-July 1943 it was obvious that Kharkov was going to be the target of the next major Soviet offensive. Had Hitler allowed Manstein to deploy a near full strength and concentrated II SS Panzer Korps in a major counter-attack into the flank of the advancing Soviet armoured formations, then this would have caused untold damage to the Soviets' plans to rapidly retake Kharkov.

The deployment of Army Group South's reserve, XXIV Panzer Korps, to the south allowed the 17.7.43 Soviet offensives in 1st Panzer Army (SS Panzergrenadier Division Wiking and 17th Panzer Division – Donets) and 6th Army's (23rd Panzer Division – Mius) sectors to be contained. Given the dire strategic situation on the Eastern Front, the fact that without further reinforcements (II SS Panzer Korps) neither of the Soviet bridgeheads could be crushed seems of little relevance. As a result Manstein's overall strategy of concentration at Kursk, which included the II SS Panzer Korps, need not have been impeded.⁹¹

Although the II SS Panzer Korps (minus the LSSAH) did eventually manage to crush the Soviet bridgehead on the Mius, in reality the operation (along with Hitler's insistence of sending the LSSAH and II SS Panzer Korps HQ to Italy) had a 'disastrous' effect on the Germans ability to resist the major Soviet offensive against Kharkov (Operation Rumyantsev) which began on 3.8.43. The decision to relocate the II SS Panzer Korps removed the most powerful panzer korps at Germany's disposal away from the centre of gravity on the Eastern Front and reduced the number of AFV repairs that could realistically be expected to be completed. The SS divisions near constant transportations in the latter half of July and the accompanying departure away from the main concentration of spare parts on the Eastern Front impeded the repair services work (particularly regarding DR). Furthermore, the resulting Mius counter-offensive severely reduced DR and SS-T AFV operational readiness for the battle of Kharkov as both divisions suffered a large number of damaged tanks, while over 25 AFV were lost.⁹²

⁹⁰Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 144.

⁹¹Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Swing of the Pendulum: The Withdrawal of the Eastern Front from Summer 1943 to Summer 1944" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 338–41; Rebentisch, Ernst, *The Combat History of the 23rd Panzer Division* (Mechanicsburg: Stackpole Books 2012), 280–85. The 6th Army Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand for 20.7.43 and 1.8.43 shows that containing the 17–24.7.43 Soviet offensive cost the 16th Panzergrenadier Division 13 tanks and the 23rd Panzer Division 12 tanks. See AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 20.7.43 T312, R1483, F000417 and 1.8.43, T312, R1483, F000441.

⁹²II SS Panzer Korps, War diary entries for 30.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000123–41; Manstein, Erich von, *Lost Victories*, (Munich: Bernard & Graefe Verlag 1982), 452; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 18–22.7.43, T354, R606, F000038; II SS Panzer Korps, Gliederung des II SS Panzer Korps am 22 und 23.7.43

In addition even though the vast majority of LSSAH panzers were left on the Eastern Front to boost the inventories of DR and SS-T, in real terms there was a loss of panzer strength. As already mentioned, DR and SS-T clearly did not have enough crews to man the additional panzers prior to the start of the Mius counter attack. The loss of the experienced LSSAH tank crews would prove particularly damaging throughout the rest of the battle of Kursk. In addition, the Eastern Front was also shorn of the LSSAH assault gun battalion, its 22 strong tank destroyer battalion and the division's returning I Panzer Battalion which was on the cusp of becoming operational with 71 (granted mechanically unreliable) Panther tanks. The LSSAH I Panzer Battalion would have been ready for action in the Kharkov area around 19.8.43. Its preparation for combat was reported to be three days ahead of DR's own Panther battalion which entered combat on 22.8.43.⁹³

As a result of these negative developments, when DR and SS-T did finally launch a coordinated counter attack west of Kharkov on 12.8.43, they did so with just 155 operational AFV.⁹⁴ By contrast, just prior to the LSSAH departure on 28.7.43, the II SS Panzer Korps had 356 operational AFV.⁹⁵ Therefore the combination of Hitler's decision to send the LSSAH to Italy and the undertaking of the unnecessary Mius offensive meant the SS counter-attack at Kharkov on 12.8.43 was reduced in strength by at least 200 operational AFV. To put this into context, as a consequence of the German high command's decision to strip away many of Army Group South armoured formations following the termination of Operation Citadel, the entire German defence (4th Panzer Army and Army Detachment Kempf) against the 3.8.43 Soviet Kharkov offensive possessed only 237 operational AFV. A week later on 10.8.43, after five additional armoured divisions (including DR and SS-T) had been rushed to the Kharkov area, the Germans could still only call on 567 operational AFV.⁹⁶ Had the II SS Panzer Korps remained in

bis zur Bereitstellung und Lage bei XXXX.A.K., T354, R606, F000039; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellungs u. Angriffsplan für den Angriff am 24.7.43, T354, R606, F000040; II SS Panzer Korps, Ablauf der Marschbewegungen II SS Panzer Korps, 24–29.7.43, T354, R606, F000043; II SS Panzer Korps, Bereitstellung des II SS Panzer Korps am 29.7.3 und Verlauf des 30.7.43, T354, R606, F000050–51; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 46 and 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807–982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43 T314, R1171, F000388–482; Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panthers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2 Vol 1*. (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2010) 152, 154 and 160.

⁹³ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879–80; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, p.136; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 71 LSSAH Panthers, 5 LSSAH Tigers, 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns and August delivery report for 53 LSSAH Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Heiber, Helmut & Glantz, David, *Hitler and his Generals: Military Conferences 1942–1945*, (New York: Enigma Books 2004), Midday Situation Report, 26.7.1943, 248–49; Forczyk, Robert, *Panther vs T-34: Ukraine 1943* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing 2007), 24–25 & 61–63. The reliability of the 71 LSSAH Panthers was so poor that, without seeing combat, they were in October 1943 exchanged for 96 new Panthers. The original faulty LSSAH Panthers were refitted in Germany and in December 1943 sent to Army Group North where they were used by Panzer Regiment 29 as semi-mobile pillboxes. In February 1944 Panzer Regiment 29 transferred its 13 surviving Panthers to SS Panzergrenadier Division Nordland, which operated them as conventional panzers. 2 of these ex-LSSAH Panthers even participated in the battle of Berlin in April 1945. Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II* (Atglen: Schiffer 1996), 257; MacDougall, Roddy and Neely, Darren, *Nürnberg's Panzer Factory, A Photographic Study* (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2013), 106–117; Archer, Lee, Kraska, Robert, and Lippert, Mario, *Panzers in Berlin 1945* (Old Heathfield: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2019), 12.

⁹⁴ III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201.

⁹⁵ II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, daily report for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 28–29.7.43, T354, R605, F000885–921.

⁹⁶ Friesser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 189–90.

the Kharkov area (the same could be said of the 3rd Panzer and Grossdeutschland divisions – the latter having briefly been sent to the Orel salient) between 20.7.-3.8.43 in order to conduct AFV repairs, then it is beyond doubt that a greater number of operational AFV would have been available to oppose the Red Army's offensive. The German repair services would have had around two weeks to conduct further AFV repairs in the same high quality repair facilities the II SS Panzer Korps had been using since the spring. The korps would have also been able to tap into the reported good stocks of spares which had been located in the area as part of the preparations for Operation Citadel. This clearly had already been occurring following the battle of Prokhorovka given the rapid rise in the LSSAH and DR AFV operational status between 13–18.7.43.⁹⁷ There was certainly good scope for further repairs as the II SS Panzer Korps including the LSSAH still had an inventory of 515 AFV (with an additional 142 Panthers for LSSAH and DR expected to arrive by late August).⁹⁸ Even following the LSSAH withdrawal, DR and SS-T (after the LSSAH panzer transfers) still had a collective inventory in excess 400 AFV, which again gives us a clear sense of how costly the Mius offensive had been for DR and SS-T AFV operational status, which to recap stood at just 155 AFV on 11.8.43 (See Table 19).⁹⁹

Table 19. SS *Sonderverbände* operational AFV pre Kharkov counter-attack (12.8.43).¹⁰⁰

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
DR Operational 11.8.43	17	26	6*	8	4*	61	20	12	93
SS-T Operational 11.8.43	9	22		7	1	39	16	7	62
Total	26	48	6	15	5	100	36	19	155

A fully operational and complete II SS Panzer Korps in the hands of Manstein would have been a fearsome prospect. Had the II SS Panzer Korps been held in reserve (close to Kharkov) following Operational Citadel, then the korps would have been quite capable of launching a coordinated counter-attack with over 400 operational AFV, crucially, at a much earlier time. However, even if a major counter-offensive at Kharkov by an undiluted II SS Panzer Korps had been, against the odds, successful, the korps divisions

⁹⁷ Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 187–88; Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2 Vol 1*. (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2010), 152, 154 and 160.

⁹⁸ PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. See delivery of 5 Tigers and 4 Sf Pak in July plus June/July 1943 delivery reports for 71 LSSAH Panthers & 71 DR Panthers.

⁹⁹ AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001.

¹⁰⁰ III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201. *closest recorded operational number. 2.8.43 for T-34 and 13.8.43 for Bef.

would soon have been worn down by constant combat with the inevitable result that AFV operational numbers would have plummeted.¹⁰¹

Even if Manstein could have initially pulled off another masterstroke at Kharkov as he had in February/March 1943, there is absolutely no doubt, given the Red Army's massive overall superiority in men and material, that the fall of Kharkov would have only been delayed for a short period. The Red Army was by now capable of conducting multiple simultaneous offensives on the Eastern Front, as a result by the summer of 1943 one localised German success, however great, would have made little impact on the course of the war on the Eastern Front.¹⁰²

By comparing the 1.8.43 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* AFV inventory for DR with the division's inventory for 1.9.43 (that is located in the order of battle chart which accompanied the 1.9.43 divisional Meldung) we can see that in reality during the defence of Kharkov and its surrounding area DR lost: 18 Pz III or Bef (at least 13 of which were conventional Pz III), 12 Pz IV (Das Reich had received 10 new Pz IV in mid-August), 5 Pz V (as mentioned DR 71 strong Panther battalion entered combat on 22.8.43) and 3 Pz VI. DR also lost 4 StuG and 4 Sf Pak over this period. As a result in total DR lost 46 AFV in the unsuccessful defence of Kharkov. Of course there is a possibility that a few of these losses occurred on 2.8.43, the last day of the Mius offensive. However, in stark contrast to the previous days fighting, that of 2.8.43 consisted of a rapid advance to the Mius. As a result few AFV losses can be expected on this day (Table 20 to 24).¹⁰³

Table 20. Das Reich operational AVF Kharkov August 1943.¹⁰⁴

-	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF
9.8.43	?	?		?	?	20	?
10.8.43	9	19		5	?	22	?
11.8.43	17	26		8	?	20	12
12.8.43	7	13		2	?	23	?
13.8.43	4	10		4	4	19	?
14.8.43	5	15		6	4	19	9
15.8.43	?	?		?	?	?	?
16.8.43	4	22		6	4	16	9
17.8.43	6	25		7	4	21	9
18.8.43	10	15		3	6	21	9
19.8.43	4	20		4	5	19	9
20.8.43	9	20		5	5	20	9
21.8.43	8	25		5	4	19	9

¹⁰¹II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43 T314, R1171, F000388-482; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 187–88; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; XI Korps, 1a Anlagen z, KTB Band 13, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 15–21.9.43 & 28–30.9.43, T314, R493; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201.

¹⁰²Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 84, 143, 99–101, 171–72.

¹⁰³AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR, 1.9.43, T78, R719; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; See August delivery report for 10 DR Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 2.8.43, T354, R606, F000059.

Table 21. Totenkopf operational AVF Kharkov August 1943.¹⁰⁵

-	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF
9.8.43	14	27		?	?	21	?
10.8.43	14	13		?	4	16	?
11.8.43	9	22		7	1	16	7
12.8.43	15	22		5	8	17	?
13.8.43	15	22		1	8	16	?
14.8.43	11	17		1	7	?	?
15.8.43	?	?		?	?	?	?
16.8.43	10	15		3	7	16	6
17.8.43	6	18		2	8	16	?
18.8.43	14	25		3	8	16	7
19.8.43	17	27		4	?	?	?
20.8.43	15	26		5	8	?	7
21.8.43	18	24		5	8	16	7
22.8.43	15	21		5	8	20	?

Table 22. SS Sonderverbände AFV inventory 1.9.43.¹⁰⁶

-	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
DR Inventory 1.9.43	51	58	66	19	4–9	?	28	8	?
SS-T Inventory 1.9.43	50–61	32–67		18–22	8–9	?	30	7	?

Table 23. SS Sonderverbände operational AFV 1.9.43.¹⁰⁷

-	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
DR Operational 1.9.43	3	10	21	2	?	?	23	7	?
SS-T Operational 1.9.43	23	9		1	?	?	15	4	?

Table 24. Totenkopf operational AVF September 1943.¹⁰⁸

-	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF
15.9.43	14	12		3	7	14	4
16.9.43	14	12		3	7	12	4
17.9.43	14	12		3	7	10	5
18.9.43	12	10		3	7	10	5
19.9.43	12	9		0	7	10	5
20.9.43	13	11		0	7	10	5
21.9.43	13	9		0	7	8	5
22–27.9.43 ?	?	?		?	?	?	?
28.9.43	7	3		0	6	?	?
29.9.43	5	3		0	5	1	3
30.9.43	5	3		0	6	0	?

It is far harder to accurately assess the AFV losses SS-T sustained in the defence of Kharkov. Following the 1.8.43 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* the next surviving complete panzer inventory (including panzers under long-term repair) for SS-T is contained in a 8th Army report from 5.10.43 (Figure 15). The report states that SS-T still had 50 Pz III;

¹⁰⁴III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201.

¹⁰⁵III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201.

¹⁰⁶AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F00044; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

¹⁰⁷Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719.

¹⁰⁸XI Korps, 1a Anlagen z, KTB Band 13, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 15–21.9.43 & 28–30.9.43, T314, R493.

however, only 26 Pz IV are recorded (3 operational, 15 short-term repair, 8 long-term repair). The divisional *Meldung* from 1.9.43 stated SS-T had 32 Pz IV operational or under short/medium term repair (3 weeks); the rest of the panzer types had greater values in the 5.10.43 8th Army report. Therefore on 1.9.43 SS-T must have had in excess of 50 Pz III and 32 Pz IV in its inventory; the divisional *Meldung* for this date did not include AFV under long-term repair. The 5.10.43 8th Army report also states that SS-T possessed 8 Bef and 23 Tiger tanks (the division had just received 5 new Tiger tanks – these were SS-T’s first new AFV of any type received since July). Although the order of battle chart which accompanied the 1.9.43 divisional *Meldung* does not include a panzer inventory, it does state that SS-T possessed 30 StuG and 7 Sf Pak.¹⁰⁹

Therefore the maximum number of panzer losses that SS-T could have sustained between 1.8.43 and 1.9.43 is: 11 Pz III, 35 Pz IV, 4 Pz VI and 1 Bef. Of course a proportion of these losses would have occurred in September. SS-T also suffered the loss of 4 StuG and 2 Sf Pak in the August fighting around Kharkov. Given that SS-T Pz IV operational numbers did not rise above the mid-20s throughout August 1943, it seems likely that many of 47 Pz IV that the 1.8.43 *Wochenmeldung* stated required ‘short-term repair’ in fact never saw combat again. These panzers would have been either abandoned during September’s retreat to the Dnieper or evacuated to homeland maintenance. The lasting detrimental impact of the Mius offensive should not be underestimated.¹¹⁰

Overall during Operation Rummyantsev the 5th Guard Tank Army (which had been reconstituted following the battle of Prokhorovka) and the 1st Tank Army once again suffered catastrophic losses. In twenty days the 5th Guard Tank Army’s strength fell from 543 tanks to only 50, while 1st Tank Army and attached units lost 1,042 vehicles (the tank army having been continuously resupplied with new tanks during the battle). When the vital transport, supply and communications hub of Kharkov was finally captured by the Soviets on 23.8.43, it came at great cost, the Soviets having lost 1,864 tanks and assault guns during the offensive. With the fall of Kharkov a German withdrawal to the Dnieper became inevitable. The Soviet success on the entire Eastern Front in July and August came at a savage cost, with the Red Army losing an astonishing 9,294 tanks and assault guns. During the same period the *Wehrmacht* lost only 1,331 tanks and assault guns.¹¹¹

Reappraising Prokhorovka

It is the author’s view that it is only sensible that the historiography of the battle of Prokhorovka, regarding German AFV losses, shifts to offering the maximum number of

¹⁰⁹AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

¹¹⁰AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

¹¹¹Frieser, Karl-Heinz, “The Battle of the Kursk Salient” in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 188–99.

Adressen des Stabschefs für Personalangelegenheiten, 1.0.1.6
I a Stabschefs, 1/43 64000, 7.5.1943

Geheime Kdos.

	II - "Totenkopf"	III. Panzer-Div.	III - "Feldberg"	III. Panzer-Div.	II - "Feldberg"	III. Panzer-Div.	III. Panzer-Div.	III. Panzer-Div.	III. Panzer-Div.
III									
Minutenschein	6	4	10	3	-	2	-	25	
Kursfr. Inst.	32	14	2	18	1	-	-	67	69
Kursfr. Inst.	12	10	3	11	8	25	-		
IV									
Minutenschein	3	14	6	6	7	1	-	37	
Kursfr. Inst.	19	11	4	20	4	20	-	74	95
Kursfr. Inst.	8	4	2	3	7	31	-		
V									
Minutenschein	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	
Kursfr. Inst.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Kursfr. Inst.	-	-	-	-	-	52	-	-	52
VI									
Minutenschein	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	
Kursfr. Inst.	17	-	-	-	-	10	27	54	22
Kursfr. Inst.	1	-	-	-	-	9	12		
Bez.									
Minutenschein	5	4	1	-	-	4	-	14	8+2(II)
Kursfr. Inst.	2	-	-	6+2(II)	-	-	-		
Kursfr. Inst.	1	-	-	1+2(II)	1	-	-	3+6(II)	
	107	61	28+4(II)	68+4(II)	28	155	39	82	203 +2(II) +6(II)

Figure 15. Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabschefs für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

AFV losses that the Germans could have suffered on 12.7.43 (losses recorded by the LSSAH and DR between 11–20.7.43) (Table 25). For the first time this figure can be given with certainty. The maximum number of AFV losses that the Germans suffered at Prokhorovka was 14 AFV losses; 12 (TF) & 2 (Homeland Maintenance). Even if SS-T losses are taken into account, this only raises the number to 16 AFV lost.¹¹²

Table 25. Maximum number of II SS Panzer Korps AFV losses during the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43 (11–20.7.43).¹¹³

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH (11–18.7.43)		4		1		5	1	1	7
DR (11–18.7.43)		4	1			5	2		7
SS-T (11–20.7.43)								2	2
Total		8	1	1		10	3	3	16

As has been shown in this and the author's last article, no archival documents can be proved reliable enough to establish correctly, individually or collectively, which of the small number of AFV losses that the II SS Panzer Korps suffered between 11–20.7.43 actually resulted from the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43. There are simply too many AFV reclassifications and errors in the daily records taking place for this to be possible. We can reach the likely number of losses for 12.7.43 (particularly in the LSSAH sector) via combat diaries, testimonies, reconnaissance images and so forth. However, unlike the periods 5–10.7.43 and 21.7–1.8.43, we cannot yet ascertain the required accuracy from the few documents which have been proven to be accurate. As a result it is simply impossible to make any certain claim as to the exact number of German AFV losses that occurred on 12.7.43 during the battle of Prokhorovka. However, the figure is likely, almost certainly in fact, to be between five and ten German AFV lost.¹¹⁴

¹¹²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

¹¹³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

¹¹⁴Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 129, 127 n, 136 n; Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, 5–10.7.43 Totalverluste, see also: 5–13.7.43, 5–14.7.43, 5–15.7.43, 5–16.7.43 and 5–17.7.43 editions; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf. Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written

Although the II SS Panzer Korps recorded no losses at all on 12.7.43, this was clearly an incorrect early assessment. The General Inspector's for the Panzer Troops 5–17.7.43 AFV loss report (daily from 10.7.43 onwards) for Army Group South has proved to be inaccurate in attributing AFV losses to specific dates. The II SS Panzer Korps engineer's 5–18.7.43 AFV loss report is accurate in terms of the number of AFV it lists as lost by LSSAH and DR (even though reclassifications within these numbers still occurred). When the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report is matched with the reliable 5–10.7.43 total loss reports for LSSAH, DR and even SS-T, this allows us to gauge accurately the maximum number of LSSAH and DR AFV losses that occurred between 11–18.7.43.¹¹⁵

However, there is simply no way to determine precisely what proportion of the 11–18.7.43 LSSAH and DR losses occurred as a result of the fighting on 12.7.43. There remains the possibility that some of these losses occurred on 13.7.43 during the last LSSAH push to reach Prokhorovka or indeed on other less active dates. Without reliable location determining TF reports that cover the period 11–20.7.43, complete accuracy will always elude us. It is not even possible to state with total confidence that the LSSAH Pz IV that is visible slightly beyond the crest of Hill 252.2 in German photo reconnaissance images from 16.7.43 and 7.8.43 was actually lost on 12.7.43. Alongside photo reconnaissance, we are forced to rely on battle reports and German testimony, neither of which can be regarded as completely watertight sources. Nevertheless, it should be stated that the body of evidence means that is almost certain that on 12.7.43 itself the Germans lost 3 Pz IV (TF) and 1 Pz IV (homeland maintenance) close to Hill 252.2. Despite this the author wanted to make the reader aware of the issue.¹¹⁶

The maximum number of AFV losses that the Germans could have suffered during the battle of Prokhorovka are distributed as follows: for the LSSAH 3 Pz IV TF and 1 Pz IV homeland maintenance, 1 Pz VI TF (for this to have occurred the '5–10.7.43 homeland maintenance Pz VI' would have remained in the LSSAH inventory {similar cases are known to have occurred}, we know this Pz VI was never considered to be a total loss, see [Figure 16](#). The LSSAH 'Prokhorovka Pz VI TF' would have been located in SS-T's sector where errors in the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's reporting are known to have occurred), 1 StuG TF, and 1 Sf Pak homeland maintenance.

For Das Reich the maximum number of AFV losses at Prokhorovka was: 1 T-34 TF, 4 Pz IV TF and 2 StuG TF. The majority of DR losses between 11–18.7.43 may well have occurred during the division's short drive to the east to link up with III Panzer Korps that

12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH Ia, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History*, Vol.18, No.2 (2019), 115–63; Ben Wheatley, "Surviving Prokhorovka: German Armoured longevity on the Eastern Front 1943–1944," *Journal of Intelligence History*, published online 2020, 24–32.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

Leibstandarte 1 Adolf Hitler
 Ib. stellvert. Leiter des
 Abtl. V. Mel./Pz.

St. Qu., den 12.7.1943

Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfs. für die Zeit vom
1.7. - 10.7.43

AN
 Gen. Kdo. II SS Pz. Korps
 Qu. V.

1.) Pz.Kpfwg.	Kennzeichen	Fahrzeuggestellnr.
10. Pz.Kpfwg. Ib		15014
3. " III		77604 xx)
20. " IV		84088
21. " IV		85291
22. " IV		85181
23. " IV		85292
14. Sturmgeschütz		92150
15. " "		91143
13. Pak Bt (BFL)		1851
14. " "		1821
2.) gep. Kfs.		
12. SS.Kfs. 251/1	162853	811793 xx)
9. " 250/1	163532	810773
10. " 250/1	163536	810228
2. " 251/9	162850	811647
2. " 251/10	162737	811625 x)

x) Skizze wird schnellstens nachgereicht.

xx) Pz. wurde von Truppe selbst geborgen und für Instandsetzung
 anderer behabelter Pz. verwendet. Wanne und Aufbau können nicht
 mehr verwendet werden, da durch Explosion der Position völlig
 ausgebrannt und mehrfach gerissen.

4 - Sturmbannführer

Figure 16. PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfs. 1-10.7.43, (written 12.7.43), T313, R390.

began on 14.7.43. DR Pz IV losses were fed into the General Inspector for Panzer Troops report on 15.7.43. This would seemingly tie in with the notion that DR losses occurred as a result of its drive east. However, we know that the DR confirmed pre-11.7.43 Pz VI loss was only fed into the General Inspector for Panzer Troops daily records on the 15.7.43 (its loss location was in reality shown in the 5-10.7.43 total loss report). Naturally this indicates that some of the Pz IV DR losses reported by the General Inspector for Panzer Troops may have also occurred on an earlier date than the 15.7.43, perhaps even on the 12.7.43. The General Inspector of the Panzer Troops (like the II SS Panzer Korps engineer) did not list DR T-34 losses. However, we know from the DR total loss report that 2 T-34 were lost between 5-10.7.43, meaning the 1 further T-34 loss that the 1.8.43 *Wochenmeldung* highlights occurred during the latter part of Operation Citadel, and indeed may have been lost at Prokhorovka.

It is sometimes mentioned that SS-T's assault gun battalion fought south of the river and thus was involved in the battle of Prokhorovka. However, SS-T lost no panzers or StuG between 11–20.7.43. So this doesn't affect the final number of German AFV losses that occurred during the battle of Prokhorovka. However, SS-T did lose 2 Sf Pak between 11.7–2.8.43 which leaves open the possibility that these AFV may have been lost on 12.7.43 at Prokhorovka.¹¹⁷

On 12.7.43 at Prokhorovka according to Valeriy Zamulin's latest research the Soviets lost 192 tanks and assault guns as total write-offs rising to 235 AFV by 17.7.43, chiefly as a result of the German post-battle destruction of abandoned Soviet tanks. The 235 tally matches Frieser's assessment. However, even though the II SS Panzer Korps inflicted serious losses on the Red Army during the battle of Prokhorovka the Soviets could still justifiably lay claim to have emerged victorious, as the Red Army had achieved one of its main aims of halting the II SS Panzer Korps advance on Prokhorovka. By 12.7.43 the Soviets had erected an almost impenetrable anti-tank screen on the high ground around Prokhorovka. This ruled out any renewed German push to take the town. While the Red Army's strongest weapon, its artillery, had yet to be fully deployed at Prokhorovka. Furthermore, despite its horrendous losses on 12.7.43 the 5th Guards Tank Army by 17.7.43 was still capable of fielding 444 operational AFV (including 5th Guards Mechanized Corps) for the defence of Prokhorovka, while a further 211 AFV were under repair or in transit to the front. As a result the Germans were forced to shift their intended axis of advance to the north-west away from Prokhorovka, towards Oboyan (Operation Roland).¹¹⁸

Conclusion

As a result of the discovery of the 6th Army's *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* for 1.8.43 we are in a position to adjust the total number of AFV losses that the II SS Panzer Korps sustained during Operation Citadel and its immediate aftermath (5–20.7.43) (Table 26). The final number of German AFV lost during the operation is extremely low at just 41 AFV (42 if we include 1 LSSAH Pz I Bef). This means that of the original 547 AFV (not including Pz I or Pz II) which embarked on the offensive on 5.7.43 with the II SS Panzer Korps, 506 AFV (92.5%) were still in the II SS Panzer Korps divisional inventories on 20.7.43 (4 new Sf Pak were received after the 10.7.43).¹¹⁹

In the early hours of 11.7.43 the II SS Panzer Korps possessed 521–522 AFV in its inventory (95.4% of its pre-Operation Citadel inventory). Therefore the II SS Panzer

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Zamulin, Valeriy. "Soviet Troop Losses in the Battle of Prokhorovka," 10–16 July 1943, *Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 32:1 (2019), 118–21; Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 136 n, 138–45.

¹¹⁹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

Table 26. II SS Panzer Korps AFV losses during operation Citadel & its aftermath 5–20.7.43.¹²⁰

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
LSSAH (5–18.7.43)	1	9		1	1*	12	3	3	18
DR (5–18.7.43)	2	6	3	1	0	12	2	0	14
SS-T (5–20.7.43)	2	4		1	0	7	1	2	10
Total	5	19	3	3	1	31	6	5	42

Korps lost just 15–16 AFV between 11–20.7.43 (521/522–15/16 =506), which of course included the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43. As the II SS Panzer Korps began the battle of Prokhorovka with no more than 522 AFV in its inventory and concluded the battle with no less than 506 of these AFV, then at least 96.9% of II SS Panzer Korps AFV survived the battle, or to put it another way the II SS Panzer Korps lost no more than 3.1% of its pre-battle (11.7.43) AFV inventory on 12.7.43 (Table 27).¹²¹ At this point we need to remind ourselves that for many years post-war Soviet and Western historiography claimed that the II SS Panzer Korps lost 300 AFV during the battle of Prokhorovka (57.5% of its pre-battle inventory), while the commander of 5th Guards Tank Army General Rotmistrov declared that the II SS Panzer Korps lost 400 AFV during the battle (76.6% of its pre-battle inventory).¹²²

Table 27. II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory July-mid August 1943.¹²³

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
4.7.43 Total	138	168	24	42	27	399	104	44	547
01:00 11.7.43 Total	133	157	22	39–40*	27	378–379	101	42	521–522
01:00 21.7.43 Total	133	149	21	39	27	369	98	43–45	510–512
26.7.43 Total	133	149	21	44	27	374	98	43–45	515–517
29.7.43 Total	129#	144	21	44	18	356	66	21–23	443–445
01:00 2.8.43 Total	119~	127	21	44	20~	331	66	21	418
9.8.43 Estimated Total (III Pz Korps)	?	?	?	42	?	ca.325	66	21	ca.412

¹²⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung und OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *Pz I Bef.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Frieser, Karl-Heinz, "The Battle of the Kursk Salient" in *The Research Institute for Military History, Potsdam, Germany, Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944*, 120–21, 128–34.

¹²³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpffwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung und OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. *This depends which LSSAH Tiger was actually written off. #Not including 3 Ex-LSSAH Pz III with II SS Panzer Korps HQ. ~2 Pz III Ig listed under Bef.

Clearly during Operation Citadel the period 5–10.7.43 was more damaging for the II SS Panzer Korps in terms of AFV losses than the period 11–20.7.43. What is perhaps even more remarkable is that on the evening of 18.7.43 350 of the II SS Panzer Korps AFV were operational, an increase of 11 AFV from 11.7.43 (the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka). This was however 138 AFV less than the 488 AFV which were operational on 4.7.43, the day prior to the launch of Operation Citadel (Table 28).¹²⁴

Table 28. II SS Panzer Korps operational AFV July-mid August 1943.¹²⁵

-	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV
4.7.43 Operational Total	117	156	18	35	25	351	95	42	488
01:00 11.7.43 Operational Total	98	87	8	16	18	227	73	39	339
23:00 18.7.43 Operational Total	73	108	17	25	22	245	76	29	350
28.7.43 (including LSSAH 24.7.43) Operational Total	92	104	2	21	14	233	84	39	356
01:00 2.8.43 Operational Total	63	24	6	2	14	109	34	16	159
23:00 11.8.43 Operational Total (III Pz Korps)	26	48	6	15	5	100	36	19	155

What the historiography of Operation Citadel always lacked, even after the true course of events became more widely known, was a single stand-alone post-Prokhorovka and post-Operation Citadel II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory which could simply be compared with the well known pre-Operation Citadel II SS Panzer Korps AFV inventory. This therefore is what makes the 6th Army's *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* for 1.8.43 such a remarkable and historically important document. Even if the *Wochenmeldung* is read in isolation, the document proves that on 20.7.43 (just four days after the conclusion of Operation Citadel) the II SS Panzer Korps possessed at least 351 (88%) of its original 399 pre-Operation Citadel complement of panzers (none of these figure includes Pz I and Pz II). According to the *Wochenmeldung* on 20.7.43 the panzers were distributed between the three SS divisions in the following way: LSSAH 89 (shown as transfers to DR and SS-T – not including the 5 new Pz VI received on 25.7.43), DR 130 and SS-T 132.¹²⁶ Of course, we also know that after Operation Citadel the LSSAH passed on 3 Pz III to the II SS Panzer Korps HQ and retained 1 Pz III, 5 Pz IV & 9 Bef (again not including Pz I and Pz II) which adds a further 18 Panzers to the actual number of Operation Citadel survivors. Therefore, in reality the total number of surviving panzers stood at 369 (92.5%).¹²⁷ The importance of the 6th Army *Wochenmeldung* therefore

¹²⁴II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43 T314, R1171, F000388-482; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 187–88.

¹²⁵Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, Daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388-482; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201.

¹²⁶PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

¹²⁷AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, *Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand* 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; Images of the tanks retained by the LSSAH can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html>; Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*,

cannot be underestimated as by itself the document tells us that in actual fact at least 88% of the II SS Panzer Korps' pre-Operation Citadel complement of panzers survived the operation and by default also the battle of Prokhorovka.¹²⁸

As we have seen, Operation Citadel was far from a disaster for the II SS Panzer Korps. Thanks to good stocks of spare parts (built up for Operation Citadel), in July 1943 a high number of damaged panzers were quickly brought back to operational readiness. By 18.7.43 (the scheduled start date of the abortive Operation Roland) 350 AFV were operational. To place this figure into context the III Panzer Korps (6th, 7th, 19th Panzer Divisions, 503rd Heavy Tank Battalion and 228th Assault Gun Battalion) began Operation Citadel with 377 AFV in its entire inventory. However, Hitler's frankly suicidal decision to send the II SS Panzer Korps south to the Mius and Italy (influenced by economic and political considerations) greatly hampered any further increase in AFV operational numbers. As a result on 12.8.43 when the when DR & SS-T did finally launch a watered down counter-attack west of Kharkov, they did so with just 155 operational AFV, instead of a powerful coordinated counter-offensive by the entire II SS Panzer Korps with an entirely feasible operational strength of over 400 AFV. Nevertheless, such a counter-offensive would have undoubtedly been the swan song of the II SS Panzer Korps (in its original form) on the Eastern Front. Even if a counter-offensive had been successful by late August with stocks of AFV spare parts exhausted and the time required to conduct major repairs having evaporated, the II SS Panzer Korps operational AFV strength would have been rapidly eroded. In addition, further major Soviet offensives on its flanks would have ultimately forced the II SS Panzer Korps away from Kharkov.¹²⁹

In reality during three weeks of defensive combat around Kharkov, DR suffered a further 46 AFV losses on top of the 10 AFV losses sustained in 3–4 days combat on the Mius Front. If we add to this total the 14 AFV DR lost during Operation Citadel we can see that during the two month long battle of Kursk (and Mius offensive) DR lost in total 70 AFV. Most damaging however, was the number of non-operational AFV that DR had accumulated in July. Nevertheless, it was not damage to AFV sustained during Operation Citadel that hindered subsequent operations around Kharkov. These had largely been made good by 18.7.43 (as they had with the LSSAH), rather it was the lengthy transports and the four day Mius operation at the end of the month that had a lasting effect on AFV availability.¹³⁰

p.136; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 5 LSSAH Tigers, 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns and August delivery report for 53 LSSAH Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1.11.43, T313, R391.

¹²⁸PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441.

¹²⁹II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43 T314, R1171, F000388-482; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 30–31, 46, 187–88; Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2 Vol 1.*, 152, 154 and 160; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201; XI Korps, 1a Anlagen z, KTB Band 13, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 15–21.9.43 & 28–30.9.43, T314, R493; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2, Vol 2.*, 156.

¹³⁰AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (writen 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR, 1.9.43, T78, R719; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 11.8.43, T314, R201; See August delivery report for 10 DR Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website; II SS Panzer Korps, Verlauf des 2.8.43, T354, R606, F000059; II SS Panzer Korps,

Although we are unable to establish the exact number of AFV losses SS-T sustained during the German defence of Kharkov, similar AFV losses to DR can be expected, given that both divisions re-entered combat around the same time. Prior to its commitment to the Mius counter-attack, SS-T had followed a slightly different path to DR, as the division had remained in combat north of Belgorod longer and undertook a more direct (if delayed) transport to 6th Army. This had the affect of slowing the recovery of SS-T's AFV numbers following Operation Citadel. SS-T's operational AFV numbers only recovered in time for the launch of the Mius offensive; however, when the offensive began SS-T operational numbers rapidly fell away as a result of the division's difficulties in taking Hill 213.9.¹³¹

Following Operation Citadel, Hitler's misuse of the LSSAH, the Donets/Mius dalliance and its associated transports left the remaining SS *Sonderverbände* of DR and SS-T ill prepared to conduct a counter-attack at Kharkov on 12.8.43. This would have far reaching consequences for the German defence of the city and the *Wehrmacht's* ability to fight east of the Dnieper.

Notes on contributor

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Daily reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 187–88; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201.
¹³¹AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

Appendix A. LSSAH AVF Strength during July 1943

Appendix A. ¹³² LSSAH AVF Strength during July 1943										
	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV	
Inventory 4.7.43	13	83		13	9	118	35	21	174	
In inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (01:00 11.7.43)	12	78		12–13*	9	111–112	33	19	163–164	
Inventory 01:00 19.7.43 (following Citadel)	12	74		12	9	107	32	22#	161	
Inventory 25.7.43	12	74		17~	9	112	32	22	166	
Inventory 29.7.43 (following transfer to DR & SS-T)	1	5			9	15	32	22	69	
Operational 4.7.43	11	79		12	9	111	34	20	165	
Operational 01:00 11.7.43	5	41		4	6	56	23	17	96	
Operational 18.7.43	7	55		9	8	79	28	16	123	
Operational 24.7.43	7	55		10	6	78	30	22	130	

Appendix B. Das Reich AVF Strength during July 1943

Appendix B. ¹³³ Das Reich AVF Strength during July 1943										
	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AFV	
Inventory 4.7.43	62	33	24	14	9	142	34	12	188	
Inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (01:00 11.7.43)	60	31	22	13	9	135	34	12	181	
Inventory 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	60	27	21	13	9	130	32	12	174	
Inventory 29.7.43 (following LSSAH transfer)	64	66	21	22	9	182	32	12	226	
Inventory 01:00 2.8.43	58*	60	21	22	11*	172	32	12	216	
Operational 4.7.43	47	30	18	12	8	115	33	11	159	
Operational 01:00 11.7.43	40	16	8	1	5	70	29	11	110	
Operational 18.7.43	36	24	17	9	7	93	28	10	131	
Operational 22.7.43	36	24	17	9	7	93	28	10	131	
Operational 27.7.43	46	20	1	3	2	72	28#	11	111	
Operational 28.7.43 (not including LSSAH Pz)	33	17	2	6	3	61	28	11~	100	
Operational 01:00 2.8.43	23	15	6	1	8	53	16	10	79	

¹³²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, written 12.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH la, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung und OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for LSSAH, 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982. *This depends on which LSSAH Tiger was actually written off. #Includes 4 new Pak Sf. ~ Includes 5 new Tigers.

¹³³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for DR, 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, DR Tagesmeldung, 9–21.8.43, T314, R201. *2 Pz III lg listed under Bef. #following day. ~previous day.

Appendix C. Totenkopf AVF Strength during July 1943

Appendix C. ¹³⁴ Totenkopf AVF Strength during July 1943									
	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AVF
Inventory 4.7.43	63	52		15	9	139	35	11	185
In inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (01:00 11.7.43)	61	48		14	9	132	34	11	177
Inventory at 01:00 21.7.43 (following Citadel)	61	48		14	9	132	34	9–11*	175–177
Inventory 29.7.43 (following LSSAH transfer)	65	78		22	9	174	34	9–11*	217–219
Inventory 2.8.43 at 01:00	61	67		22~	9	159	34	9	202
Operational 4.7.43	59	47		11	8	125	28	11	164
Operational 01:00 11.7.43	53	30		11	7	101	21	11	133
Operational 18.7.43	30	29		7	7	73	20	3	96
Operational 16:45 20.7.43	39	26		5	6	76	?	?	?
Operational 28.7.43 (not including LSSAH Pz)	52	32		5	5	94	26	6#	126#
Operational 01:00 2.8.43	40	9		1	6	56	18	6	80

Appendix D. II SS Panzer Korps HQ AFV Strength during July 1943

Appendix D. ¹³⁵ II SS Panzer Korps HQ AFV Strength during July 1943									
	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	Total Pz	StuG	Pak Sf	Total AVF
Inventory 29.7.43 (following LSSAH transfer)	3					3			3

¹³⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 2.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, SS-T Lageskizzen written 23.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (written 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; AOK 6, 1a, KTB 9, Zustandsberichte, Wochenmeldung über Panzer und Sturmgeschützlage Stand 1.8.43 (written 6.8.43), T312, R1483, F000441; II SS Panzer Korps, SS-T Fehlbestände an Waffen und Grossgerät, 3.8.43, T354, R605, F001001; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 187–88; II SS Panzer Korps, Daily reports for SS-T 18.7–2.8.43, T354, R605, F000807-982; XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, XXXXVIII.Pz-AK, Daily reports for SS-T 18–20.7.43, T314, R1171, F000388-482; III Pz Korps, 1a Anlage z, KTB Band 1 & 2, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 9–22.8.43, T314, R201. *2 Pak SF lost sometime between 11.7.43 and end of Mius operation. #Unlikely to be less than 6 as this number of SS-T Pak Sf was operational on 31.7.43. ~At some point after 2.8.43 two damaged pre-Citadel era SS-T Tigers 250 103 and 250 230 were sent to homeland maintenance and then converted into Sturmmörser 38 cm 'Tiger'. In October 1944 250 103 was serving with Sturmmörser Kompanie 1001, while in December 1944 250 230 was serving with Sturmmörser Kompanie 1000. Delivery dates can be found at sturmpanzer.com.

¹³⁵II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T la 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung . 1.11.43, T313, R391.