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Surviving Prokhorovka: German armoured longevity on the Eastern Front in 1943–1944

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ABSTRACT

This article attempts to chart the ultimate fate of each German tank, assault gun and tank destroyer of the SS Panzergrenadier Divisions Leibstandarte and Das Reich that participated in the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43 against the Soviet Union's 5th Guards Tank Army. The central question of the article being; If large numbers of German Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFV) did not meet disaster on the 'tank fields' southwest of Prokhorovka (as was claimed for many decades by both Soviet and Western historiography), then when exactly did those participating German AFV of the Leibstandarte and Das Reich finally succumb to the Red Army? How long did they survive on the Eastern Front against an ever more sophisticated and skilled opponent? By determining the ultimate fate of these German AFVs in the autumn and winter of 1943/44, it is possible to get a fuller understanding of the battle of Prokhorovka itself.

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Introduction

In early July 1943, the II SS Panzer Korps consisted of SS Panzergrenadier Division Leibstandarte (LSSAH), SS Panzergrenadier Division Das Reich (DR) and SS Panzergrenadier Division Totenkopf (SS-T). Although all three divisions of the II SS Panzer Korps participated in Operation Citadel (the German offensive against the Kursk salient which ran 5–16.7.43) only the Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFV – for the duration of this article AFV refers to fully tracked AFV such as tanks, assault guns and tank destroyers unless otherwise stated) of LSSAH and Das Reich directly opposed the counter-offensive of the Soviet Union's 5th Guards Tank Army on 12 July 1943 to the south and southwest of the town of Prokhorovka.¹ As a result, this article focuses on the ultimate fate of the AFV of LSSAH and DR; despite this, for

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¹For full details of the opposing forces, their respective plans, Operation Citadel and the battle of Prokhorovka itself see the author's previous article on the subject. Ben Wheatley, A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka, *Journal of Intelligence History*, Vol.18, No.2 (2019), pp.115–63. The article included Luftwaffe reconnaissance pictures of the Prokhorovka battlefield from July and August 1943, many of which were newly published (for example, the Tiger tank duel with 170th Tank Brigade and the full length of the anti-tank ditch in German hands) and all were correctly interpreted for the first time (this included such fundamentals as the location of the anti-tank ditch in the images), see two unexamined images of the Prokhorovka battlefield in Christopher Lawrence, *Kursk: The Battle of Prokhorovka* (Colorado: Aberdeen Books 2015), pp.598–99 and the incorrectly located anti-tank ditch in map on p.934; Totenkopf's AFV fought on the periphery of the battle and at most provided supporting fire to the LSSAH left flank.

reasons that will become clear, it is also necessary to closely monitor the fate of the AFV of SS-T. Along with the German Army's Grossdeutschland Panzergrenadier Division, all three of the II SS Panzer Korps divisions were considered *Sonderverbände* (special units); this brought them special privileges in terms of an expanded organisational structure and access to resupply, as well as replacement armour and personnel.² During Citadel, this status also brought additional access to AFV battlefield recovery units.

The primary sources: documentary evidence of the ultimate fate of German AFV

We are fortunate that a large proportion of the 4th Panzer Army's Motor Transport Officer (MTO) reports have survived in the archives. It was the MTO's role to document the status of all the AFV under his jurisdiction. The 4th Panzer Army was the controlling army of the II SS Panzer Korps during Operation Citadel, while in turn the 4th Panzer Army was under the jurisdiction of Army Group South. Amongst the documents to have survived are monthly chassis number reports from January 1943 through to June 1944.³ These reports list the individual chassis number for every AFV in the divisional inventories. Importantly, for the three Waffen SS divisions that constituted the II SS Panzer Korps at the launch of Operation Citadel on 5.7.43, there is such a report for the 1–2.7.43.⁴ Overall these reports afford us the opportunity to track the AFV of LSSAH and DR that were with the divisions during the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43 until their ultimate demise on the Eastern Front before the spring of 1944. Another important source of information for AFV are the divisional ten-day status reports from February through to July 1943; these include the three participating SS divisions ten-day status reports for the 1–2.7.43 and 10.7.43.⁵ No post-Prokhorovka status reports have survived for 20.7.43 (if indeed they were ever produced). These reports provided an early detailed collective assessment of the status of a unit's AFV over a ten-day period; [Figure 1](#) provides an example of one such document, that of DR on 10.6.43. The ten-day status reports were also available from January 1943 through to June 1944.⁶

Sadly there is no surviving ten-day status or monthly chassis number reports for the three SS divisions for the rest of July, August or September. This is because the three SS divisions left the jurisdiction of the 4th Panzer Army within a week of the termination of the Citadel offensive in the south on 16 July (LSSAH eventually headed to Italy, DR and

²Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2* (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2010), 162; At least in theory anyway – for example, by the winter of 1943/44 of these 'Sonderverbände' only the LSSAH was continuing to regularly receive good quantities (by German standards) of replacement AFV.

³All archival documents in this article are located at the US National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD unless otherwise stated. See PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH (available until July 1943), DR (available until July 1943 and from October 1943 until March 1944) & SS-T (available until July 1943), Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. in T313, Rolls 364, 387, 390. Combined in DR. Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung in Rolls 391 and 408.

⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390.

⁵PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43, T313, R390.

⁶See PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH (available until July 1943 and from October 1943 until January 1944), DR (available until July 1943 and from October 1943 until March 1944) and SS-T (available until July 1943), Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung in T313, Rolls 364, 387, 390, 391 and 408.

	Pz. Kpf. I Sd. Kfz. 101									Pz. Kpf. Wg. II Sd. Kfz. 121									Pz. Kpf. Wg. III Sd. Kfz. 141									Pz. KpfWg 38(r)	
	mit Turm (2 MG)	ohne Aufbau	VK 601	VK 901	VK 1801					mit 2cm Kw.K.	ohne Aufbau	VK 1601	VK 1303 luchs				mit 37cm Kw.K.	mit 5cm Kw.K./42	mit 5cm Kw.K./100	mit 75cm Kw.K./24	Flammwagen						mit 37cm Kw.K.		
f	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28		
1) Soll									14	4									46										
2) Ist davon									1	-									9	56									
a) einsatzbereit									-	-									2	37									
b) zur Instandsetzung bei der Truppe									-	-									7	18									
c) zur Instandsetzung bei Pz. Instand. Abt. He. K.P. K. Verlust oder anderweit. rückw. Inst. Einrichtungen									1																				
3) Abgänge davon																													
a) zur Instandsetz. in He.Zs. abgegeben																													
b) Totalausfälle (Art des Schadens unter Bemerk. eintragen)																													
4) Zugänge davon																													
a) aus Instandsetz. aus 3a)																													
b) Neuankunft durch O.K.H. letzte Meld.																													
c) Beute																													

Figure 1. PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.6.43, T313, R387.

SS-T to the Mius front) any later reports would have been issued to alternative armies (8th, 6th and 1st Panzer Armies).⁷ However, no equivalent MTO chassis reports for these armies has yet to materialise in the archives. The MTO also collated *Totalausfälle* (TF) (Total Failure/Loss) reports (again available February 1943–June 1944) which although produced less frequently detailed the chassis numbers of AFV which were written off in the 3.b category for losses – these AFV were believed to be beyond all hope of repair.⁸ A 3. b AFV would understandably be removed from the divisional inventory. We have TF reports for LSSAH, DR and SS-T that cover the period 5–10.7.43, i.e. the first six days of the Citadel offensive.⁹ This allows us to establish accurately the make-up of the AFV in the inventories of the LSSAH and DR for 11.7.43, a day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka. There was also a 3.a category for losses; these were AFV which were often deemed repairable, but the damage was such that the AFV had to be sent to the Homeland for factory repair. As 3.a AFV faced an extended absence from the front (and there was no guarantee they would return to their former division), this meant they too were to be removed from the divisional AFV inventory.

⁷Frieser, 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), 340–41.

⁸See PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. in T313, Rolls 364, 387, 390, 391 and 408.

⁹PzAOK 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.

Post-Citadel reports of strength and losses are also important in establishing the final total loss count for the Germans during Citadel. There is, for example, a particularly illuminating document concerning the II SS Panzer Korps operations during Citadel which was written by the korps engineer. The report (see [Figure 5](#)) that covers losses between 5–18.7.43 (including information gained on these losses to 22.7.43) is important as only the regimental, divisional and Korps level engineers were permitted to write-off tanks from a unit's inventory.¹⁰ The officers who composed the 10-day status reports did not have the authority to write-off tanks – this naturally elevates an assessment by a unit's engineer above all others when determining a tank's ultimate fate. By using a combination of the available documentary sources it is possible to accurately give German losses for the LSSAH and DR between 11–18.7.43. In regards to the LSSAH given its lack of activity following the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43, the information available allows us to give a little more detail regarding the number of losses sustained that day.¹¹ For example, it seems that one of the four Pz IVs lost on Hill 252.2 at the very start of the Soviet offensive was ultimately recovered and sent to Germany for repair.¹² This article will also closely explore the validity of the claim that a Tiger tank was ultimately lost as a result of damage sustained on 12.7.43.¹³

On the whole monthly AFV chassis number inventory reports can be regarded as the more accurate source of information than 10-day status reports. The former's formulation was more considered due to the fact that as a monthly report they could take account of any re-classifications that had been made since the issue of 10-day status reports. Ten-day status reports should be viewed as rapid assessments conducted when information was sometimes still in short supply as to an AFV true level of damage or fate. However, both the 10-day and chassis number reports often contained amendments from previous issues. Sometimes significant changes occurred. For example, there were instances of AFV having first being declared as TF, ultimately returning to operational status. Later, this article will explore some examples of this phenomenon.

From October/November 1943 through to March 1944, first DR and then LSSAH returned to 4th Panzer Army control. As a consequence chassis number reports (unfortunately no longer for LSSAH), sporadic TF reports and 10-day status reports are available in the archives for both divisions over this period (until mid-January 1944 for the LSSAH).¹⁴ DR chassis number reports are significant as they allow us to see how many of the division's AFV, including those formally belonging to LSSAH, had survived

¹⁰II 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; Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 180.

¹¹The Leibstandarte made a limited attack on 13 July in an attempt to find a weak spot in the Soviet defences. The attack was aborted as soon as the panzers were met by anti-tank fire. Following this both the Germans and Soviets remained passive in the LSSAH sector until the Germans withdrew on 17 July. 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* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017), 130 & 136 n.

¹²Compare 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 with PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (written 12.7.43), T313, R390. Also compare with reported losses in Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS: up to 10.7.43 1 Pz III, 5 Pz IV and 1 Tiger; up to until 13.7.43 1 Pz III, 7 Pz IV and one Tiger; up until 14.7.43 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV and one Tiger; This was also the final result on 17 July. It is clear that the latter report includes both 3.a & 3.b losses and after 12.7.43 is going through a period of reassessment.

¹³For background information regarding the potentially lost LSSAH Tiger tank from 12.7.43, see Ben Wheatley, A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka, *Journal of Intelligence History*, Vol.18, No.2 (2019), 139–51.

¹⁴See PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH and DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung in T313, Rolls 391 and 408.

since the battle of Prokhorovka. Totenkopf, which had also received ex 'Prokhorovka' LSSAH panzers, remained on the southern portion of the Eastern Front below 4th Panzer Army throughout this period which meant the ultimate fate of its ex-LSSAH 'Prokhorovka' panzers is far harder to decipher. However, good estimates are possible by using other sources. These include a AFV status report from 8th Army dating to early October 1943 (in the surviving records it is extremely rare for armies to report overall AFV strength – usually only operational AFV numbers are reported), replacement AFV shipment reports and monthly divisional *Meldung* (reports) which list the number of operational AFV, the number of AFV expected to be repaired within 3 weeks and Order of Battle charts. When used together with the Citadel era reports, we can establish fairly accurately when the ex-LSSAH panzers with Totenkopf succumbed. The replacement AFV shipment reports and monthly divisional *Meldung* are also available for LSSAH and DR. This is particularly useful in establishing the AFV strength of these divisions between August and October 1943 when few other reports are available.¹⁵

The German procedure for categorising damaged and lost AFV

The procedure for writing off AFV was not a straightforward one. AFV could be listed as damaged (in various categories) for many weeks or even months before a final decision to write them off as TF was taken. However, this represented a small percent of the overall TF. Most TF occurred straight away on the battlefield. As a result, one should not expect initially reported TF loss counts to be drastically amended. Equally the same is true in the reverse; few AFV were listed as TF only to reappear operational later. Nevertheless, both instances did occur and would create subtle changes to overall TF and damaged AFV counts. However, that this scenario occurred at all should always be borne in mind when one is determining the fate of specific AFV.

When assessing German armoured losses it is important to fully understand the German procedure for categorising damaged and lost AFV. We shall use the first page of Das Reich's 10-day status report for the 10.6.43 as an example (see [Figure 1](#)).¹⁶

Category 1 (*Soll*) indicates the number of AFV the unit is authorised to possess. Category 2 (*Ist*) indicates the number of AFV the division actually possesses. Category 2.a declares the number of operational AFV available. 2.b these are tanks that are under repair by the field troops (within the division), AFV that it was hoped could be repaired quickly or at least relatively quickly in the field would be included in this category.¹⁷

There were three levels of AFV repair in the field. First, at company level, the AFV would be attempted to be repaired by the driver and co-driver; if this was not possible they would seek assistance from *I-Gruppe* (repair group) personnel. Second, at the battalion level, there was another *I-Gruppe* for HQ vehicles. At the third level where work was permitted to exceed 60 hrs was the regimental *Werkstattkompanie* (workshop company) – this unit performed the heaviest repairs in the field. AFV were regularly sent

¹⁵ 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; For Waffen SS monthly divisional *Meldung* and OB charts see Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, T78, R719.

¹⁶ PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 10.6.43, T313, R387.

¹⁷ Lukas Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2* (Monroe: Panzerwrecks Publishing 2010), 16–17, 56, 126–28, 8.

straight to the *Werkstattkompanie* for assessment and repair, though the hope was levels 1 and 2 could repair AFV if possible.

To quote from the excellent work by Lukas Friedl on AFV maintenance:

If due to overwork or the severity of the damage, the *I-Deinst* (repair service) of a unit could not cope with the accumulating repair work, a panzer was sent outside the panzer regiment to a panzer *Werkstattkompanie* in the area of its superior armies, to a stationary *Panzer-Instandsetzungs-kraftfahr-Werk* (Tank Repair Automotive Plant or *K-Werk*) of the Army Group or even to homeland maintenance.

Category 2.c covered those AFV which required repair at army and army group level repair facilities. These AFV were in need of heavier, more complex and time-consuming repair. Prior to 1942, AFV requiring repair above the independent army level *Werkstattkompanie* would have had to be sent back to Germany. However, the great distances involved in transporting an AFV from the Eastern Front to Germany meant that it was no longer practical to send AFV this great distance for heavy repair. The solution was the establishment of forward heavy factory level repair facilities (*K-Werk*) in the occupied Soviet Union, one each for the three army groups on the Eastern Front. The forward heavy repair facilities were civilian-run and the brainchild of Jakob Werlin, a director of Daimler-Benz. Army Group North's facility (staffed by M.A.N. personnel) was established in Riga, Army Group Centre's (staffed by Daimler-Benz personnel) was established in Smolensk, while Army Group South's *K-Werk* (staffed by Krupp personnel) was located in Dnepropetrovsk. AFV sent to 2.c repair facilities officially remained in their parent unit's inventory – once repaired the AFV would return to its parent unit.

Category 3 represents losses. AFV in this category were to be removed from the division's inventory. Those AFV in sub-category 3.a required the heaviest level of repair and required transport back to Germany for homeland maintenance (*Heimat-Instandsetzung*). These AFV were first to be sent to an Army ordnance supply depot (H.Za. – located in Magdeburg, Vienna & Königsberg) from there the AFV would be forwarded to the manufacturer for major repairs. Only heavy hull and superstructure damage (cracks in the armour and full penetrations with simultaneous warping of the faces, full penetrations that resulted in heavily damaged interior equipment, heavier damage caused by fire, and water damage to panzers that were under water for any length of time) had to be sent to a *K-Werk* or Homeland maintenance. It is worth stating that AFV that did not *have* to be sent to the *K-Werk* or Homeland were so treated in times of overwork for the lower level field repair units. This latter consideration can obscure the real level of damage in those AFV listed as requiring 2.c or 3.a level repair. This article will provide evidence that despite being listed as 3.a and removed from units *Ist* (actual) totals some AFV against regulations remained in divisional inventories. As we shall also discover this arrangement would later be formalised with AFV officially returning to homeland maintenance in the 2.c category in order keep them within the units' inventory. Thus, once repairs were complete, the AFV would (despite the distances involved) return to their parent unit. In all probability, this was a formalisation of a long-running practice, one that can be traced back to at least early 1943. This reluctance on the part of the divisions to relinquish tanks from their inventory is well articulated by William Auerbach who wrote:

German commanders were loath to write off panzers and instead carried them on their books ad infinitum, wary of sending them back to the homeland for fear they would never be replaced. As a result deadlined vehicles would be dragged forward during an attack and dragged backward in retreat.

Category 3.b was for a total loss (*totalausfälle*); these were AFV which had been totally destroyed or whose level of damage put them beyond hope of repair.

Finally, category 4 was for replacement AFV; these weapons were immediately included in a unit's inventory and *Ist* (actual) total within the 10-day status reports. 4.a were AFV which had returned to the front after being repaired by Homeland maintenance. 4.b indicated that these were newly manufactured AFV, while 4.c was reserved for captured AFV.

February–June 1943. The arrival of the SS Panzer Regiments on the Eastern Front and the origins of the battle of Prokhorovka

The three SS divisions that constituted the SS Panzer Korps, as the II SS Panzer Korps was initially known, first began active operations complete with armoured regiments from February 1943.¹⁸ The divisions all having suffered severe losses in 1941/1942 had been withdrawn to the West in 1942 in order to be reconstituted as *Sonderverbände* or in other words reinforced panzergrenadier divisions. Each of these special panzergrenadier divisions was to have a reinforced panzer regiment and an organic heavy tank company equipped with the extremely formidable Tiger tank which had thick armour and was armed with an 88 mm long-barrelled high-velocity gun. From the beginning, the LSSAH Panzer Regiment was further strengthened with its two panzer battalions each consisting of three medium companies which almost entirely consisted of modern Pz IV armed with a long-barrelled L43 75 mm main gun (10 per company). The LSSAH could also call on a fully equipped assault gun battalion outfitted with StuG which were also armed with long-barrelled 75 mm weapons and (highly unusual for early 1943) a fully equipped self-propelled (Sf) anti-tank gun (Pak) battalion which were armed with similar 75 mm long-barrelled main guns. Das Reich and Totenkopf, although extremely well equipped for the early part of 1943, still relied heavily on Pz IIIs with long-barrelled 50 mm guns to fill their panzer regiments ranks. Four of their six panzer companies were light – which by 1943 standards meant they were issued with Pz IIIs – the other two companies were medium and like LSSAH operated long-barrelled 75 mm L43 Pz IVs. As mentioned, both Das Reich and Totenkopf like the LSSAH had an organic Tiger tank company and a fully equipped assault gun battalion. However, unlike the LSSAH, there was no fully self-propelled anti-tank battalion. In fact, only Das Reich had a company of such guns to supplement its towed anti-tank guns, Totenkopf had to make do with a battalion equipped purely with towed anti-guns.

The SS Panzer Korps was sent to the Eastern Front in a desperate attempt to provide Field Marshal Manstein's Army Group South with fresh armour to stem the tide of the hugely successful Soviet winter offensives. The offensives had already resulted in the encirclement (22.11.42) and recent destruction (2.2.43) of the German 6th Army at

¹⁸Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II* (Atglen: Schiffer 1996), 37, 47, and 64; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.3.43, T313, R364; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 2–3.3.43, T313, R364.

Stalingrad liberated the Caucasus and all the territory east of the Mius. Although the introduction of the SS Panzer Korps could not prevent the initial loss of Kharkov in mid-February, Manstein would utilise the korps fresh troops as the main driving force for his famed counter-offensive that resulted in the recapture of Kharkov and Belgorod and more critically helped to save the southern portion of the Eastern Front from the very real threat of total collapse.¹⁹

Table 1 shows the initial AFV strength of the three-component SS divisions of the SS Panzer Korps when they arrived at the Eastern Front in February 1943.

With the recapture of Kharkov and Belgorod in late March 1943, the southern portion of the Eastern Front was stabilised on the line of the Donets and Mius rivers. The SS Panzer Korps sustained AFV losses during these engagements. As a result, the SS Panzer Korps AFV strength on 1 April 1943 is as shown in Table 2. The SS Panzer Korps had not yet received any additional panzers.

It is important to chart the chronology of the Totenkopf Tiger that had been reported to be a total loss and thus is not included in Table 2. The Tiger had fallen through ice while attempting to cross a river sometime between 2/3–10.3.43 and was placed in the 2.c category for damaged tanks which were to be repaired at army or army group level.²⁰ There is photographic evidence of this stranded Tiger (tactical number 411) in the river.²¹ The Tiger was placed separately in brackets above two other damaged Tigers within the 2.c category due to the fact that it was ‘*Steht unter Wasser*’ or submerged and therefore due to the weather unrecoverable. This remained the case until the 21.3–1.4.43 status report declared the Tiger was now categorised as a 3b total loss and was as a result removed from the status report’s *Ist* (or actual) total of Tigers available to the Totenkopf division.²² This though would not be the end of this Tiger’s story. The next surviving 10-day status report which reported up to and including 1.5.43 still listed only 8 Tigers in Totenkopf’s *Ist* total; however, the separate 1.5.43 divisional inventory reported the chassis numbers of 9 Tiger.²³ The Tiger had in fact been recovered from the river and after receiving factory inspection and repair, was ‘returned’ to the division between 2–10.5.43 via the 4.a category (for returning AFV from the 3.a homeland maintenance category).²⁴ The appearance of the Tiger in the 1.5.43 inventory is clear evidence that despite being reported as a total loss (this information was even reported to the General Inspector of Armoured Troops office) and removed from the division’s *Ist* (actual) total of available Tigers, Totenkopf’s engineer had against regulations kept the Tiger in the division’s inventory throughout this period.²⁵ The indications are that this Tiger was simply being reclassified as opposed to any repairs having been completed. The 1.5.43 status report lists 8 Tigers in the division’s (2) *Ist* total of which 6 were (2.a) operational and 2 were (2.c) under army or army group level repair. While the 10.5.43 status report (issued on 12.5.43), which reported the return of the formally semi-submerged Tiger, lists

¹⁹Wegner 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), 1187.

²⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.3.43, T313, R364.

²¹Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II* (Winnipeg: J.J. Fedorowicz 1998), 219.

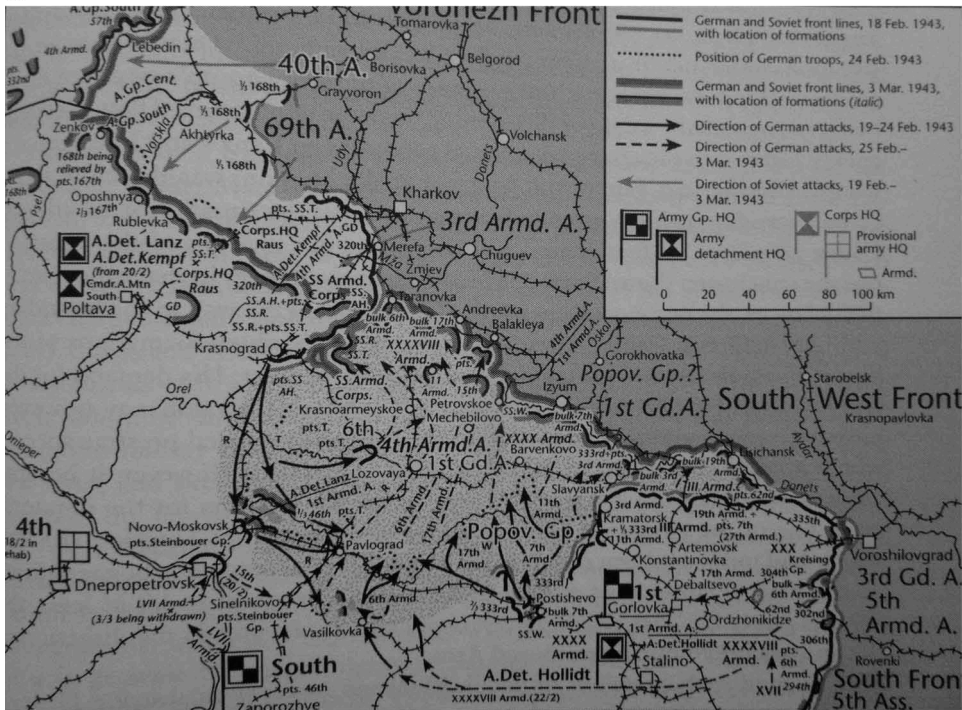
²²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.4.43, T313, R387; See also PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.3.43, T313, R387.

²³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.5.43, T313, R387; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.5.43, T313, R387.

²⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.5.43, T313, R387.

²⁵Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Panzerkampfwagenlage, see SS-T 1.4.43, T78, R619, F000689.

a



b

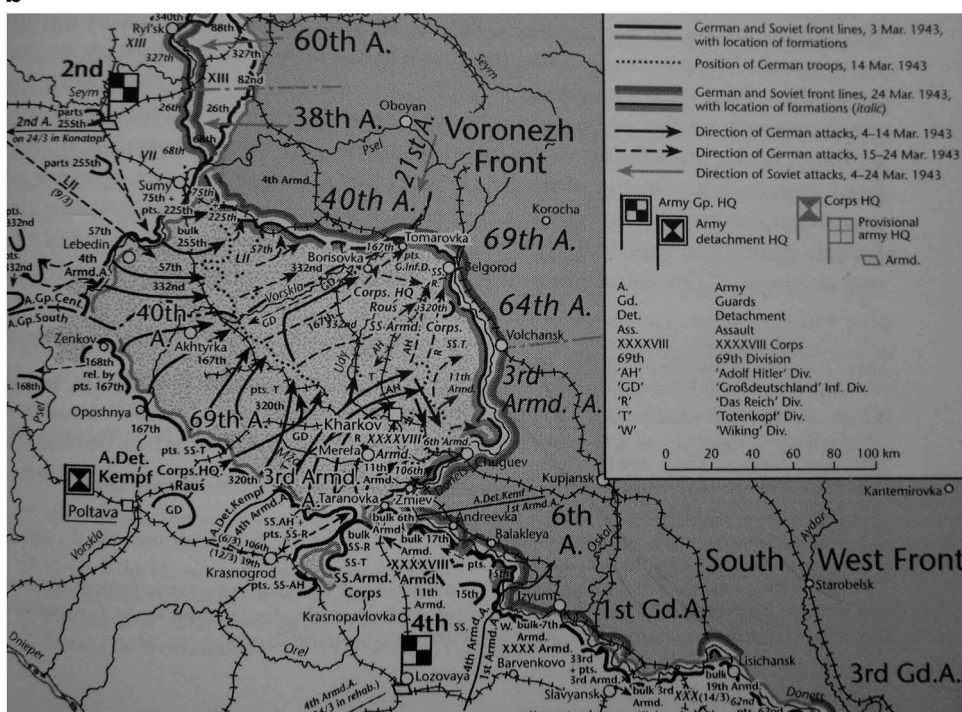


Figure 2. (a,b) Manstein's Counter-offensive, 18 February to 24 March 1943, Source: Map VI.VIII.I., Wegner, Bernd *Germany and the Second World War Volume VI: The Global War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2015). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Table 1. Initial SS Panzer Korps AVF Strength February 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory	12	10	52	9	9	28	28		
Das Reich Inventory	10	81	21	10	9	22	9		
Totenkopf Inventory	9	81	22	9	9	22	0		

Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, 37; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.3.43, T313, R364; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR & SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 2–3.3.43, T313, R364.

Table 2. SS Panzer Korps AVF Strength 1 April 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory	11	12	41	8	10	22	20		
Operational 31.3.43	11	10	28	5	10	18	14		
Das Reich Inventory	5	70	13	8	9	20	11		
Operational 28.3.43	0	0	0	0	0	4	0		
Totenkopf Inventory	8	73	19	8	9	21	0		
Operational 1.4.43	6	27	3	2	4	10	0		

Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Panzerkampfwagenlage, 28.3–1.4.43, T78, R619, F000689; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.3.43, T313, R387; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 28.3–1.4.43, T313, R387.

9 Tigers in the division's (2) *Ist* total of which once again 6 were (2.a) operational but now 3 Tigers were listed as (2.c) under army or army group level repair. Clearly, this raises the distinct possibility that the 'returning' Tiger had gone straight back into the division's 2.c category and had in fact physically always remained at Army Group South's *K-Werk* in Dnepropetrovsk.²⁶ There is also a strong probability that the Tiger in question was specifically Tiger 250 101.²⁷ The example of this Tiger is important on many levels. It shows that in reports AFV were capable of being radically reclassified, that it is impossible to get an accurate account of an AFV fate from a solitary AFV report and that the determination of SS divisional engineers' to keep AFV in divisional inventories, particularly Tiger tanks, cannot be underestimated.

Even after the arrival of the SS Panzer Corps and II Battalion of Grossdeutschland's Panzer Regiment (its existing I battalion was already at the front) by 1.4.43 on the entire Eastern Front, the Germans were down to only 1,336 tanks and assault guns, of which just 612 were operational. The Germans, by contrast, estimated they were already facing an enemy with over 6,000 tanks and assault guns at its disposal.²⁸ Consequently, the months of April–June 1943 was one of the quietest periods on the Eastern Front as both sides (exhausted from their monumental efforts over the winter) undertook an extended period of planning, reorganisation and reinforcement. The Soviets were settling on a policy of initial strategic defence to be followed by massive simultaneous offensive operations. While the Germans recognising their inability to win the war on the Eastern Front in 1943 instead sought to conduct a major pre-emptive attack (Operation Citadel) as part of an overall policy of strategic defence.²⁹

²⁶Compare PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.5.43 & 10.5.43, T313, R387.

²⁷250 101 was the only Totenkopf Tiger tank to remain in the 2.c category from 1.5.43 (the earliest surviving SS-T inventory) through to at least 2.7.43 (the final SS-T inventory to have survived). Compare PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.5.43 & 1.6.43 in T313, R387 with PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, SS-T, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 2.7.43 in T313, R390.

²⁸Frieser, 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*, 66.

²⁹Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History* 18, no. 2 (2019): 119–20.

On 1.5.43, the panzer regiments of LSSAH, Das Reich and Totenkopf were ordered to reorganize in preparation for Operation Citadel, the planned German pincer attack on the Kursk salient.³⁰ Personnel from one battalion of both SS Panzer Regiment 1 and SS Panzer Regiment 2 were to be sent back to Germany to create a Panther battalion for each panzer regiment. The remaining elements of the panzer regiments were to be reorganized and filled with 75 newly issued Pz IV, so that: Totenkopf would have a panzer regiment with two battalions each with two medium and one light panzer-companies, LSSAH would have a reinforced Panzer battalion with four medium Panzer companies, and Das Reich would have one Panzer battalion with two medium and two light Panzer companies and one battalion (its anti-tank battalion) with two T34 companies and one light Panzer company. During this time, the SS Panzer Korps was also renamed the II SS Panzer Korps effective from 1.6.43. The ultimate aim of the General Inspector of Panzer Troops (Heinz Guderian) at this time was made clear by an order issued by OKH GenStdH/Org.Ab on 14.6.43 to reorganise the Panzer Regiments and Panzer battalions on the Eastern Front:

It is expected that it will be possible to fill every Panzer battalion in all Panzer Divisions in the Eastern Army with 96 Panzers (mostly Pz IV, several Pz III with long barrels) by December 1943. In addition, it is intended that a Panther battalion be created in Germany for the majority of the Panzer Divisions. Therefore, it is necessary to reorganize the Panzer battalions in the Eastern Army.

Similarly, the heavy Tiger companies of the three SS divisions (as with all other Tiger units) had received the order to covert to purely Tiger operated companies each with 14 Tigers (previously 9). This resulted in the loss of the Tiger companies' supporting Pz IIIs. In spring 1943, all three SS Tiger companies transferred their Pz IIIs to their respective regiments for reallocation; however, the LSSAH Tiger company did keep four of its 13 Pz IIIs in a light platoon (see [Table 4](#)). On 22.4.43, a further order was issued for the three organic SS Tiger companies with the divisions to be combined into a new korps level heavy SS panzer abteilung with an authorised strength of 45 Tigers. A battalion staff company was to be created in Germany which would later take over command of the three existing SS Tiger companies already at the Front. This order was resisted particularly by the LSSAH, and for the time being, each of the SS divisions maintained an organic Tiger company. As a result, the 17 new Tigers that were intended to complete the establishment of this new heavy abteilung were instead sent in May 1943 to the Eastern Front in order to allow the divisional SS Tiger companies to reach their new authorised strength of 14 Tigers per company. As [Table 1](#) indicates, the three SS Tiger companies had originally been issued 28 Tiger tanks; the 17 new additions meant that the SS Panzer Korps had received the equivalent of an heavy abteilung's full allocation of 45 Tigers. On 1 May, orders were then issued to further boost the three divisional Tiger companies to an authorised strength of 15 (each company was to receive a command Tiger). Despite this order, no additional Tigers were shipped to accomplish this expansion prior to the launch of Operation Citadel on 5.7.43. In May 1943, Das Reich and Totenkopf each received their 6 new Tigers, while the LSSAH

³⁰Thomas Jentz, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, 52, 66.

Table 3. II SS Panzer Korps AVF Strength during July 1943.

	Lt Pz	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory 4.7.43	7	13	83		13	9	35	21	12	6
In inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	6	12	78		12	9	33	19	12	6
Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	6	12	74		12	9	32	22	12	6
Operational 4.7.43	7	11	79		12	9	34	20	11	5
Operational 11.7.43	6	5	47		4	7	20	17	12	5
Operational 18.7.43	?	7	55		9	8	28	?	?	?
Das Reich Inventory 4.7.43	1	62	33	24	14	10	34	12	12	6
In inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	1	61	32	22	13	10	33	12	12	6
Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	1	60	27	?	13	10	32	12	12	6
Operational 4.7.43	0	47	30	18	12	8	33	11	11	6
Operational 11.7.43	0	34	18	8	1	7	27	11	11	4
Operational 18.7.43	?	36	24	17	9	7	28	?	?	?
Totenkopf Inventory 4.7.43	0	63	52		15	8	35	11	12	6
In inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	61	48		14	8	34	11	12	6
Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	0	58	46		14	8	34	9	12	6
Operational 4.7.43	0	59	47		11	8	28	11	12	5
Operational 11.7.43	0	54	30		10	7	21	11	12	6
Operational 18.7.43	0	30	29		7	7	20	?	?	?

Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 46, 187–88; 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; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH Ia, Tagesmeldung für den 24.7.43, T354, R605, F000867; 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.

received just 5 Tigers (together these Tigers constituted the 17 new Tigers mentioned above).³¹ This left the LSSAH Tiger company with 13 Tigers (it had lost 1 Tiger as a total write-off between 1–10.3.43 during the Kharkov counter-offensive), Totenkopf on the other hand, following the conclusion of the submerged Tiger escapade, had lost no Tigers and was now in possession of 15 Tigers – including a command Tiger. Das Reich, which had begun with 10 Tigers, had lost 2 Tigers during the Kharkov counter-offensive; therefore, it now possessed the first updated authorised company strength of 14 Tigers.³²

The desire to increase AFV strength as embodied within the 14.6.43 order had already been on display for some months prior to the order's issue. From March, the LSSAH was permitted to possess an authorised strength of 84 Pz IV, regardless of the official organisational structure.³³ As we can see from Table 3 by the launch of Operation Citadel on 5.7.43 only the LSSAH had in effect achieved this desired strength, the LSSAH having reached a strength of 83 Pz IVs.

As the last shipment of 16 LSSAH Pz IVs only arrived between 1–5.7.43, it proved impossible to distribute these panzers amongst the proposed 8th company of 1 SS Panzer Regiment (lack of crew availability was also a major factor).³⁴ Taking into account the new organisational orders for 96 panzers per battalion, the LSSAH

³¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.5.43, T313, R387.

³²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.3.43, T313, R364; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 25.2.43, T313, R364; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 17.3.43, T313, R387.

³³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.3.43, T313, R364.

³⁴Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 46; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.7.43, T313, R390.

Table 4. Non-typical Panzers of LSSAH.

Unit	Number	Panzer	Photo Source
Regiment/Stab Nachrichten Zug	055	Panzer IV Ausf G	Agte
	054	Befehlspanzer III Ausf J	Lehmann, Im Bild
	053	Befehlspanzer III Ausf J	Agte
	052	Panzer II Ausf F	Spezzano – Kursk 4
	051	Befehlspanzer III Ausf H	Spezzano – Kursk 2
Aufklärung Zug	050		
	067	Panzer II Ausf F	Westemeier, ‘Peiper’
	066		
	065	Panzer IV Ausf G	Spezzano – Kursk 3
	064	Panzer IV Ausf G	Spezzano – Kursk 3
	063		
	062	Panzer IV Ausf G	Spezzano – Kursk 2
2nd Abteilung Stab	061		
	060	Panzer III Ausf M	Michulec ‘Waffen-SS in combat’
	555	Befehlspanzer III Ausf J	The Author
	554	Befehlspanzer III Ausf J	
	556	Panzer III Ausf J	
	557	Panzer III Ausf M	
	558	Panzer III Ausf M	
13th Kompanie/le Zug	559	Panzer III Ausf M	Spezzano – Kursk 3
	1341	Panzer III Ausf M	
	1342	Panzer III Ausf M	
	1343	Panzer III Ausf M	Agte, Wittmann
	1344	Panzer III Ausf M	

Content of Table 4 kindly supplied by the researcher Stephen Ballantyne.

1 SS Panzer Regiment’s II Battalion had already chosen to distribute its 67 existing Pz IVs amongst its three existing companies. Therefore, the 5th, 6th and 7th companies now had an expanded strength of 22 Pz IV per company. The spare Pz IV was converted into a regimental command tank.³⁵ Therefore, when the LSSAH received its additional 16 Pz IV prior to Citadel, these tanks helped to populate the regimental command and reconnaissance platoons (see Table 4), while the remainder created a pool of replacements for damaged tanks. The LSSAH command would have expected the number of operational AFV to plummet following the commencement of any offensive; therefore, a small pool of replacement Pz IVs for the three existing companies of the LSSAH’s II panzer battalion would have been viewed as being highly advantageous.³⁶ During Operation Citadel, there is no photographic evidence of any panzers operating in an 8th company of the LSSAH’s II panzer battalion. However, there is documentary evidence from 23.7.43 which confirms that the LSSAH’s II Panzer Battalion consisted of only three panzer companies during July 1943.³⁷ The non-standard tanks of SS Panzer Regiment 1 (i.e. other than Pz IVs or Tigers) were distributed amongst the command units, while as we have noted the Tiger company against regulations had kept a light platoon containing 4 Pz IIIs (see Table 4).

³⁵This tank (tactical number 055) would be one of the few retained by the LSSAH after the division transferred to Italy at the end of July 1943. Images of these tanks heading to Italy can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html> See also: Jentz, Thomas, (ed.) *Panzer Truppen II*, 136.

³⁶Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 180.

³⁷II SS Panzer Korps, Abschrift Fernschreiben, LSSAH Ia, 23.7.43, T354, R605, F000856.

The Southern Pincer of Operation Citadel 5–16.7.43

Despite Vatutin's defensive deployment during Operation Citadel, Soviet armour had suffered catastrophic losses. The tank units of 6th and 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. A large proportion of those losses were incurred in the first few days of the battle. By contrast, up to and including 10 July, the attacking units of Army Group South lost only 116 tanks and assault guns in all, although they had to fight their way through enemy positions under the most adverse conditions.³⁸

Table 5 lists the AFV that the II SS Panzer Korps reported as being TF (3.b) between 5–10.7.43.³⁹ This together with those losses listed as being sent for homeland repair (3.a 1 Pz IV and 1 Tiger both from the LSSAH) over the same period gives us the available strength of the II SS Panzer Korps on 11.7.43 – the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka.⁴⁰

Points of note from Table 5: The LSSAH long-barrelled L60 Pz III 77 604 which was reported as TF was in fact later transferred to DR on 28.7.43 (the LSSAH began Citadel with 13 Pz III of which 3 had short-barrelled L42 guns).⁴¹ The 10.7.43 ten-day status report only lists one short-barrelled Pz III as TF – this must have been the case as we know all ten LSSAH long-barrelled L60 Pz III were transferred away from the LSSAH before it headed to Italy – none appear in any subsequent LSSAH reports while a total of 11 Pz III were transferred away on the 28.7.43. This figure must have included a short-barrelled L42 Pz III. This is made certain as only one conventional short-barrelled L42 Pz III (i.e. not a command tank) travelled with the LSSAH to Italy and then back to the Eastern Front in November 1943 – the short-barrelled Pz III then appears in subsequent LSSAH reports. Overall, both DR and SS-T each took ownership of four LSSAH Pz III on 28.7.43 while the II SS Panzer Korps HQ took a further three. This left one remaining Pz III which as mentioned went with the LSSAH to Italy. The loss of a Pz III between 5–10.7.43 must then have been (as the 10-day status report indicated) a short-barrelled Pz III rather than 77 604. Secondly, Das Reich's Pz IV 84 223 is listed as TF between 5–10.7.43 in a TF report which was updated with knowledge gained up to 13.7.43. However, DR 10.7.43 ten-day status report lists only one Pz IV as TF (this would be 84 231). Later on 31.10.43 Das Reich lists 84 223 as being part of its inventory. It is then listed as 3.a & sent to Reich for repair between 1–10.1.44. Like the LSSAH Pz III 77 604 the tank must have either been recoverable or not as badly damaged as first feared. These two examples highlight that it is important not to view specific TF reports as being final. Finally, the DR TF Tiger (250 085) is one of the three Tigers listed in the DR 1–10.7.43 ten-day status

³⁸Frieser, *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.

³⁹PzAOK 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.

⁴⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390.

⁴¹PzAOK 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 and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391. PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408; 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; Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 136.

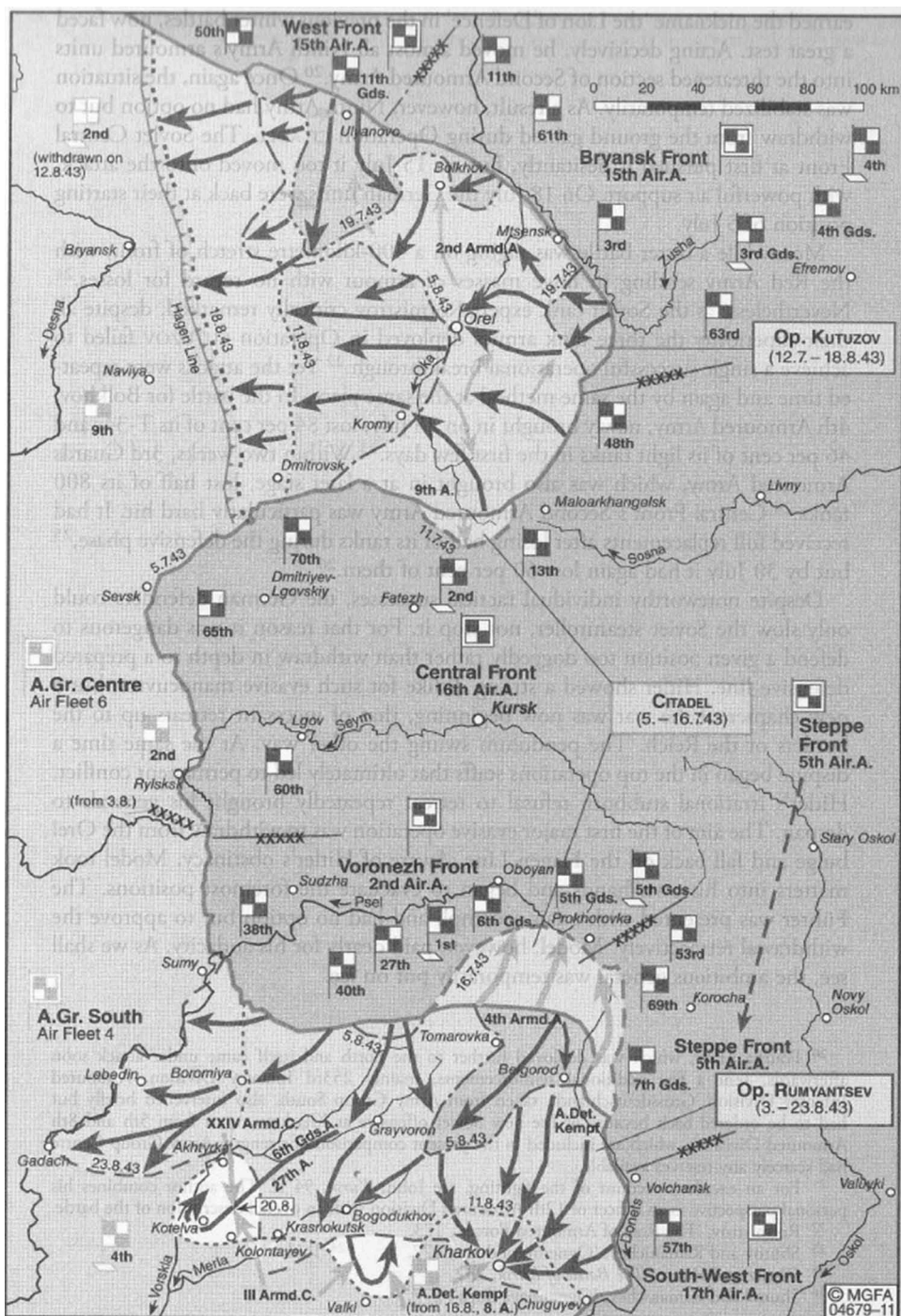


Figure 3. The battle of the Kursk Salient (5 July to 23 August 1943), Source: Map II.IV.7., Frieser, Karl-Heinz Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944 (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Table 5. Reported Total Losses of II SS Panzer Korps during Operation Citadel 5–10.7.43.

	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	

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.

report as ‘*noch nicht geborgen*’ (not yet recovered). The updated TF report allowed for this to be refined to one TF – the other two Tigers once recovered returned to service.

The 10-day status reports were often correct in terms of numbers; however, in the heat of battle, it was difficult to assess the exact condition of damaged or originally declared TF AFV, particularly, if the AFV was close to or even behind enemy lines. A good example of this can be seen in the case of DR Pz IV 82 712 (an ex-LSSAH Pz) which was reported 3.b TF 11–20.1.44. In fact, it transpired that this panzer was written off as TF (and removed from the division’s inventory by the engineer) as it had been abandoned behind enemy lines. However, following a change in the frontline, the panzer was recovered on 23.1.44 & returned to the division’s inventory. This case highlights how quickly a radical reclassification could be made. 82 712 was eventually handed over by DR to the 19th Panzer Division on 29.2.44 for further service. 82 712 along with DR stalwart 84 242 (also transferred to the 19th Panzer Division on the same date) were the only DR Pz IVs, present at the battle of Prokhorovka with either with LSSAH or DR, to survive on the Eastern Front into March 1944.⁴² (see Appendix for full details).

Another example of administrative failure occurred when DR Pz IV 85 087 was reported to be 3.b TF 20–31.10.43 and removed from the division’s inventory; however, the next report 1–10.11.43 states the tank was then listed as 3.a for Homeland Maintenance and once again removed from the inventory of the division. DR *Ist* total or actual number of on-hand Pz IV was not adjusted to compensate for this anomaly; therefore, the same tank in consecutive reports was chalked off twice. The 20–31.10.43 report recorded 3 Pz IV total losses (84 904, 83 852 & 85 087) which took the *Ist* total down to 46 Pz IV, while the next report 1–10.11.43 stated that the division received 1 new Pz IV from 4a homeland maintenance (83 875), lost 1 Pz IV 3.b as a total loss (83 256) and lost 1 Pz to Homeland Maintenance (85 087) which according to the report brought DR’s inventory down to 45 Pz IV. Clearly, these numbers do not align and point to an administrative error in the report, either in terms of the correct *Ist* total or in the identification of 85 087 as being the lost/damaged Pz IV in question in one of the reports.⁴³

⁴²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.1.44, 1.2.44 and 29.2.44. T313, R408.

⁴³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43 and 10.11.43. T313, R391.

The battle of Prokhorovka 12 July 1943: The opposing forces

The Stavka (the Soviet high command) envisaged 12.7.43 as the decisive day in the battle of Kursk. To the north of the Kursk salient, Bryansk Front and large parts of West Front launched an offensive against Germany's thinned-out 2nd Panzer Army. When the front collapsed, Walter Model's 9th Army would have to halt its advance on Kursk. A destructive strike on the attacking formations of Army Group South was also planned for the same day. The strongest weapon was the 5th Guards Tank Army under the command of Pavel Rotmistrov, whose total of 909 tanks and 43 assault guns were intended to smash the battle-worn II SS Panzer Korps at Prokhorovka.⁴⁴

On 12 July, the whole of II SS Panzer Korps had at its disposal a total of 211 operational battle tanks, 72 assault guns and 43 tank destroyers. However, since SS Panzergrenadier Division Totenkopf was attacking northwards on that date on the far side of the river Psel, there remained only SS Panzergrenadier Divisions Leibstandarte and Das Reich, with a total of 117 battle tanks, 51 assault guns and 32 tank destroyers, that is, 200 fighting vehicles in all, which could be deployed against 5th Guards Tank Army.⁴⁵

On the morning of 12 July, Rotmistrov possessed 838 operational fighting vehicles, and a further 96 tanks were brought in. Of his five corps, he kept 5th Guards Mechanized Corps in reserve and deployed around 100 of its tanks to secure his left flank against the III Panzer Korps approaching from the South. Thus, 672 Soviet fighting vehicles were effectively engaged that day in action against the 200 tanks, assault guns and tank destroyers of Divisions Leibstandarte and Das Reich. Rotmistrov's operational plan involved thrusts in two directions:

- The main thrust was directed from the north-east frontally against SS Panzergrenadier Division Leibstandarte through the Prokhorovka corridor between the railway embankment and the river Psel. The riverbank was boggy and there were several ribbon villages along it, leaving a strip about only 3 km wide in which to manoeuvre. In this section of the main thrust, 18th Tank Corps with 190 battle tanks (96 T-34, 63 T-70 and 31 Churchill Tanks) was to attack on the right along the river Psel, and 29th Tank Corps with 192 battle tanks (122 T-34 and 70 T-70) and 20 assault guns (Su 122 and SU 76) on the left along the railway embankment. This meant that, in the very first phase of the battle, more than 400 fighting vehicles advanced on the Leibstandarte Division, which had only 56 battle tanks (5 Pz III, 47 Pz IV and 4 Pz VI – Tiger Tanks), 24 StuG assault guns and 20 Marder tank destroyers at its disposal.

⁴⁴The XXXXVIII Panzer Korps and the II SS Panzer Korps were to be attacked from four directions: From the west by 1st Tank Army, including 5th Guards Tank Corps and the newly arrived 10th Tank Corps, reinforced by infantry and artillery units; From the north-west by units of 6th Guards Army; From the north-east by 5th Guards Army, newly brought in from Steppe Front. From the east by 5th Guards Tank Army, also brought in from Steppe Front, reinforced by 2nd Tank Corps and 2nd Guards Tank Corps, plus a number of attached units. Further to the south-east, 7th Guards Army had the task of breaking through the front on III Panzer Korps right flank and advancing its rear towards Razumnoye (in the direction of Belgorod). Frieser, *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*, 119–20.

⁴⁵This and the subsequent paragraph are used with permission of OUP. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear. Frieser, *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), 121–22. See Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 106 & 187. See also Töppel, "Kursk – Mythen und Wirklichkeit einer Schlacht," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 57 (2009): 375.

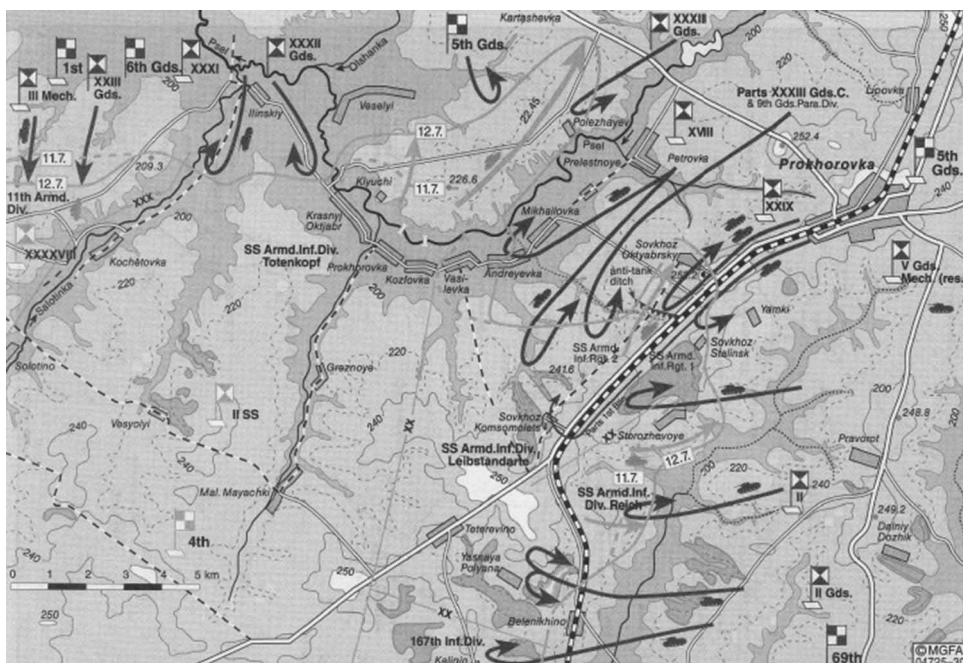


Figure 4. The tank battle at Prokhorovka on 12 July, Source: Map II.IV.6., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

- Another thrust was to be directed simultaneously from the east at the German flank, against the SS Panzergrenadier Division Das Reich, which was deployed on the right alongside Leibstandarte. Here the attack was to be carried out by 2nd Guards Tank Corps, supported by 2nd Tank Corps. Altogether 200 Soviet tanks stood ready, against which the German division could deploy 61 battle tanks (42 Pz III, 18 Pz IV and 1 Pz VI), 27 StuG assault guns and 12 Marder tank destroyers.

Account must also be taken of Voronezh Front formations, especially 69th Army, which were fighting in this sector anyway. In addition, units of 5th Guards Army, which was also part of the strategic reserve, were deployed in the zone of action of 5th Guards Tank Army, for example, 9th Guards Paratroop Division. German intelligence was expecting a counter-attack but by no means one of such dimensions.

Table 6. German AFV Inventory for the Battle of Prokhorovka 12 July 1943.

	Lt Pz	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	6	12	78		12	9	33	19	12	6
In DR inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	1	61	32	22	13	10	33	12	12	6
Combined German inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	7	73	110	22	25	19	66	31	24	12

Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), 46, 187–88; PzAOK 4, O. Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfbwg. 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, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.7.43, T313, R390.

The II SS Panzer Korps Engineer's report on total losses sustained during Citadel

As previously mentioned, only an engineer had the authority to declare an AFV as 3.b total loss (TF) and remove it from the inventory of a unit. Therefore, the fact the II SS Panzer Korps engineer prepared a document that covered AFV losses (including armoured cars and armoured personnel carriers) between 5–18.7.43 is hugely significant. Before its publication, the report was updated to include knowledge gained up to 22.7.43.⁴⁶ The results of this report are shown in Table 7(a-d), while the first page of the original document can be seen in Figure 5. The table has been matched with the 1–10.7.43 ten-day status reports for the three SS divisions as well as the TF reports which are available for 5–10.7.43.⁴⁷ There seem to be no contradictions between those reports and the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report.

As my previous article articulated, the battle of Prokhorovka was largely fought by the Germans from extremely strong defensive positions which meant that German armour was seldom in locations in which it could either be damaged or lost in great numbers. One vulnerable location, however, was on and near Hill 252.2 in the triangle between the Oktiabrskiy state farm, the railway line and the anti-tank ditch (7 Pz IVs fought here – 4 losses – 3 TF & 1 homeland maintenance), the other was on the slope of Hill 241.6 towards the ribbon village of Andreyevka (4 Tiger tanks were engaged in combat here – 1 suspected loss).⁴⁸ DR faced far less Soviet tanks to the south-east and suffered no write-offs on 12 July.⁴⁹ DR's post 10.7.43 losses occurred over the coming days as it struggled east to affect a link up with the III Panzer Korps.⁵⁰ By contrast, according to Valeriy Zamulin's latest research, the Soviets lost 208 (Frieser gives the figure of 235) tanks and assault guns as total write-offs during the battle of Prokhorovka.⁵¹

On the day of the battle of Prokhorovka, no German tanks were reported as 'write-off's' by the LSSAH or DR either as 3.b total losses or 3.a for homeland maintenance.⁵² However, four Pz IV tanks were left immobilized on the battlefield and could not initially be assessed or recovered because of enemy fire; so the write-off figures had to be adjusted later.

⁴⁶II 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.

⁴⁷PzAOK 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.

⁴⁸For a review of the battle in these locations, see Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History* 18, no. 2 (2019): 125–51.

⁴⁹Frieser, *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.

⁵⁰II SS Panzer Korps, Map of korps actions, new and proposed front lines 14–18.7.43, T354, R606, F000035.

⁵¹Valeriy Zamulin, "Soviet Troop Losses in the Battle of Prokhorovka, 10–16 July 1943," *Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 32, no. 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*, 130–31.

⁵²Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, See: 5–10.7.43 Totalverluste; 12.7.43 no losses in dual damage/loss report – there is no specific Totalverluste report; 5–13.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–14.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–15.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–16.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–17.7.43 Totalverluste, SS-T final losses 5–17.7.43 were: 2 Pz III, 8 Pz IV & 1 Pz VI; PzAOK 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.

**Table 7. II SS Pz Korps Engineer's report of total losses sustained between 5.7–18.7.43 (as of 22.7.43).**

(a) LSSAH				
AVF	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
Pz Ib	1	Includes 2 Pz IV which were to be sent to the Reich for repair. One of which was almost certainly recovered from the Hill 252.2 area following the battle of Prokhorovka. To be sent to the Reich for repair. At some point prior to 28.7.43 this Tiger may well have been reclassified. The LSSAH Tiger which was immobilised at Prokhorovka (12.7.43 – Hill 241.6 – declivity towards Andreyevka) would not have been written off until after the 18.7.43 when Totenkopf's troops withdrew from the area.	1 TF	3 TF & 1 IH
Pz III	1		1 TF	
Pz IV	9		4 TF & 1 IH	
Pz VI	1*		1 IH	
StuG	3		2 TF	1 TF
Pak Sf	3		2 TF	1 IH
Schztz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
250/1	2		2 TF	
251	1		1 TF	1 TF
251/1	4		1 TF	3 TF
251/9	2		1 TF	1 TF
251/10	4		1 TF	3 TF
Pz.Sp.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
222	1			1 TF
261	1			1 TF
(b) Das Reich				
AVF	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
Pz III	2		1 TF	1 TF
Pz IV	6	23.7.43 report covering 5–10.7.43 lists 84 223 (which is not included here) as TF – it was returned to action with DR.	1 TF	5 TF
Pz VI	1		1 TF	
StuG	2		1 TF	1 TF
Schztz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
250/1	1			1 TF

(Continued)

Table 7. (Continued).

(c) Totenkopf				
AVF	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
Pz III	6*	*Includes 1 Pz III listed lost between 11–18.7.43 which was then recovered and repaired.	2 TF	3 TF & 1 IH*
Pz IV	7*	*Includes 1 Pz IV listed lost between 11–18.7.43 which was then recovered and repaired.	4 TF	2 TF & 1 IH*
Pz VI	1		1 TF	
StuG	1		1 TF	
Pak sf	2			
Schitz.Pz.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
251/1	8	Includes 2 which were to be sent to the Reich for repair	1 TF	5 TF & 2 IH
251/10	1			1 TF
Pz.Sp.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
223	1			1 TF
Pz.Fu.Wg. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
263	1			1 TF
(d) Korps – Truppen				
Kdo.Pz. Sd.Kfz.	Number of TF & Inst. Heimat	Inst. Heimat (IH – Homeland Maintenance)	Lost as a result of action between 5–10.7.43	Lost as a result of action between 11–18.7.43
250/6	1 TF		?	?
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; 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.				

<u>Betr.: Einsatz Raum Belgorod.</u>			
Die zum 22.7.43 haben die Divisionen für die Zeit des Einsatzes im Raum Belgorod vom 5.7.- 18.7.43 folgende Totalausfälle an Kfs.-Großgerät gemeldet:			
1.) <u>Pz.Kpfw. u. Stu.Gesch., sowie Sf.</u> , unterteilt nach Div.			
<u>Ls II - A. H.</u>			
Pz.Kpfw.	IIb	1	
" "	III	1	
" "	IV	9	davon 2 zur Inst. Heimat
" "	VI	1	zur Inst. Heimat
Stu.Gesch.		3	
Pak Sf.		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 Sf.		2	
2.) <u>SS.Kfs. S. P. W.</u> , unterteilt nach Divisionen.			
<u>Ls II - A. H.</u>			
<u>Schltz.Pz.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SSO/1		2	
SS1		1	
SS1/1		4	
SS1/9		2	
SS1/10		4	
<u>Pz.Sv.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SS2		1	
SS1		1	
<u>Das Reich</u>			
<u>Schltz.Pz.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SSO/1		1	
<u>Totenkopf</u>			
<u>Schltz.Pz.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SS1/1		9	davon 2 zur Inst. Heimat
SS1/10		1	
<u>Pz.Sv.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SS3		1	
<u>Pz.Pz.Wg. SS.Kfs.</u>			
SS3		1	

Figure 5. 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.

During the course of Operation Citadel, Army Group South reported to the General Inspector of Panzer Troops Office the following losses which include both 3.a and 3.b types:

- 5-10.7.43 DR: 1 Pz IV and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 5 Pz IV (we know one is a 3.a) 1 Pz VI (3.a)
- 12.7.43 no losses in dual damage/loss report – there is no specific *Totalverluste* report for this day.
- 5-13.7.43 DR: 1 Pz III, 1 Pz IV and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 7 Pz IV, 1Pz VI
- 5-14.7.43 DR: 1 Pz III, 1 Pz IV and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV, 1Pz VI
- 5-15.7.43 DR: 1 Pz III, 6 Pz IV, 1 Pz VI and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV, 1Pz VI
- 5-16.7.43 DR: 1 Pz III, 6 Pz IV, 1 Pz VI and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV, 1Pz VI
- 5-17.7.43 DR: 1 Pz III, 6 Pz IV, 1 Pz VI and LSSAH: 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV, 1Pz VI

When comparing these figures with the 5–18.7.43 II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report, we can see the daily *Totalverluste* reports were clearly going through a period of recalibration, as the incidents which brought about these losses often had occurred days earlier (for example, the four LSSAH Pz IV losses on Hill 252.2 all stemmed from 12.7.43 but were fed in over 13–14.7.43). This is an important consideration when one considers that an immobilised (but potentially repairable) LSSAH Tiger tank would not have been written off until after 18.7.43, by which time Totenkopf's troops had completely withdrawn from the base of Hill 241.6 and the area within the Vasilevka – Andreyevka – Hill 258.2 (just south of Komsomolets farm) triangle.⁵³ Das Reich's sole Tiger tank loss during Citadel is another example of a loss which was only reported in the daily reports days after its actual loss.⁵⁴

The four LSSAH Pz IVs in question belonged to Rudolf von Ribbentrop's 6th Company, SS Panzer Regiment 1.⁵⁵ The II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report indicates that it is highly likely that one of these four Pz IV 'lost' in the first stages of the battle of Prokhorovka was after all recovered from the area close to Hill 252.2 and sent for homeland maintenance in Germany, the other three Pz IV were 3.b total write-offs. We know this as five of the total of nine Pz IV losses (of which two of the latter were 3.a cases) in the engineer's report are already chronicled in other surviving records. Firstly, the LSSAH 1–10.7.43 10-day status report lists five Pz IV lost of which four were 3.b TF and one was 3.a for homeland maintenance; secondly the LSSAH 5–10.7.43 TF report lists four Pz IV as total losses. This then leaves the four discussed Pz IV from the battle of Prokhorovka – some of which can be seen in aerial reconnaissance photos taken shortly after the battle. By using the same surviving LSSAH ten day status and TF reports we can also deduce that the LSSAH lost up to 8 of its 13 total armoured personnel carrier (SPW) losses close to Hill 252.2.⁵⁶ It must be remembered that the Germans and the Soviets in the LSSAH sector, apart from a brief skirmish the following day, both went onto the defence until the LSSAH withdrew from the area on 17.7.43.⁵⁷ The loss figures for both the Pz IVs and SPW fit well with German testimony of the battle which as the photographs used in my previous article proved was often surprisingly accurate.⁵⁸

⁵³ 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.

⁵⁴ Compare PzAOK 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; Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, See: 5–10.7.43 Totalverluste; 12.7.43 no losses in dual damage/loss report – there is no specific Totalverluste report; 5–13.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–14.7.43 Totalverluste; 5–15.7.43 Totalverluste.

⁵⁵ For a review of the battle in this location, see Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History* 18, no. 2 (2019): 125–42.

⁵⁶ PzAOK 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.

⁵⁷ The Leibstandarte made a limited attack on 13 July in an attempt to find a weak spot in the Soviet defences. The attack was aborted as soon as the panzers were met by anti-tank fire. Following this both the Germans and Soviets remained passive in the LSSAH sector until the Germans withdrew on 17 July. 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*, 130 & 136 n.

⁵⁸ For a review of the battle in this location, see Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History* 18, no. 2 (2019): 125–42.

There is also German testimony which ascribes the loss of a LSSAH Tiger tank on Hill 241.6 from damaged sustained (from shell shot) during the battle of Prokhorovka. As with the Panzer IVs the Tiger was said to have been left immobilised on the battlefield (potentially in a repairable state) but had to be written off later as enemy fire made recovery impossible.⁵⁹ We will discuss below in detail the potential for a lost LSSAH Tiger stemming from the battle of Prokhorovka and how it might have been possible that such a loss was not included in any Citadel TF summary report such as the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report. The overall consistency between the 10-day status, 5–10.7.43 TF and II SS Panzer Korps Engineer reports is important as it shows beyond all reasonable doubt that these reports were very largely accurate. However, as my research has revealed slight errors in the make-up of the numbers could be expected to occur, particularly in terms of which specific tanks were involved and the classification they truly belonged to.

Another post-Citadel summary report is known to exist, one produced for Hitler's SS adjutant Fritz Darges.⁶⁰ It contains similar figures though on a few levels the data is incorrect. The report sent to Darges at Hitler's headquarters by the II SS Panzer Korps 1a gave the status of the II SS Panzer Korps at midday on 21.7.43 and states explicitly that the losses in the report are TF. In reality, it appears the report includes both 3.a & 3.b losses. If in fact this report is truly reporting only 3b TF losses, then the report lists three SS Tigers as 3.b – it may then have included a LSSAH Tiger tank lost as a result of the battle of Prokhorovka. An example of an error contained in this report can be seen in the fact that only five Pz III lng are reported as TF. As we have seen the II SS Panzer Korps Engineer report lists nine Pz III losses. Granted we know one of these Pz III was a short barrelled LSSAH weapon, while another Pz III from Totenkopf had in fact (as the Korps engineer notes) already been repaired and returned to the division. However, this still leaves a discrepancy. On the whole then, the Darges report cannot be considered accurate. The highly detailed information contained in the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report clearly highlights that this individual was the most informed officer to report on the II SS Panzer Korps losses during Operation Citadel and its immediate aftermath.

The General Inspector of Panzer Troops final summary report is the sum total of the daily reports from across Army Group South, which was 175 tanks and assault guns lost over 5–17.43.⁶¹ For its part Voronezh Front lost 1,397 tanks and 33 assault guns up to 22.7.43.⁶²

The Tiger on the Hill – was a LSSAH Tiger tank lost at Prokhorovka?

During the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43, the 18th Tank Corps fought a duel with four Tiger tanks after the breakthrough of the 170th Tank Brigade into the Leibstandarte's weakly defended left flank (west of the anti-tank ditch). The photographs of this encounter are contained in my previous article; GX-3734-SK-61 (16.7.43) and GX-3942-SK-69 (7.8.43), but also partially in photographs; GX-2696-SK-23, GX-2696-

⁵⁹Karl-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*, 127 n.

⁶⁰II 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.

⁶¹Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS, 5–17.7.43 Totalverluste.

⁶²Frieser, 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*, 152.

SK-24, GX-2696-SK-52 (14.7.43); while the results of the Tiger tanks subsequent action in the late morning/early afternoon against the 181st Tank Brigade which was advancing uphill from the river Psel towards the Tigers original firing positions (on the summit of Hill 241.6 - on the most detailed maps this precise point is labelled as 228.4, this point is located on the same plateau as the governing Hill 241.6.) are visible in photographs GX-2696-SK-23, GX-2696-SK-24 and GX-2696-SK-52 (14.7.43).⁶³

The early afternoon thrust by the 181st Tank Corps directly uphill towards the summit of Hill 241.6 from the direction of the Psel and the ribbon village of Andreyevka encouraged the Tigers to move forward to the declivity of the hill in order to engage this new threat.⁶⁴ The Tigers then fought the Soviet tanks from various positions on the declivity. We can make this assumption with confidence as to engage the Soviet tanks the Tiger tanks would have to have moved from their original firing positions in order to bring the Soviet tanks into their line of fire. The topography of the battlefield forced the 13th Company forward (see figure 34 in the previous article).⁶⁵

It is the author's belief that it was during this engagement that the company suffered its only Tiger 3.b total loss during Operation Citadel. According to German testimony, the lost Tiger, having been immobilized by shell shot, would ultimately be deemed unrecoverable due to enemy fire.⁶⁶ As with the unrecoverable Pz IVs beyond the crest



Figure 6. 18th Tank Corps battlefield; Source Google Maps.

⁶³NARA 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; see map in Schneider, Wolfgang, *Das Reich Tigers* (Winnipeg: J.J. Fedorowicz 2006), 110.

⁶⁴Zamulin, Valeriy, *Demolishing the Myth: The Tank Battle at Prokhorovka, Kursk, July 1943: An Operational Narrative* (Solihull: Helion 2011), E-book locations: 8035, 8041 and 8055. See also Robert Forczyk, *Kursk 1943: The Southern Front* (Oxford: Osprey 2017), 78.

⁶⁵For background information regarding the potentially lost LSSAH Tiger tank from 12.7.43, see Ben Wheatley, "A Visual Examination of the Battle of Prokhorovka," *Journal of Intelligence History* 18, no.2 (2019): 139–51.

⁶⁶Frieser, 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*, 127 n.



Figure 7. GX-2696-SK-52 14 July – Prokhorovka Battlefield; 181st Tank Brigade vs Tiger company on Hill 241.6 – The potential LSSAH Tiger is circled.

of Hill 252.2, we can establish that the Tiger was lost forward of Hill 241.6 as to be under consistent enemy fire the tank must have been fairly far forward of the Leibstandarte's front lines.⁶⁷ Given that this is the only location on 12 July that the Tigers fought close to enemy lines and yet far enough removed from the majority of the panzer regiment (i.e. its recovery unit) then the Tiger must have been lost on the declivity of this hill. In all probability, the Tiger was lost in the middle ground of the following photographs (in range of Soviet tank fire from Andreyevka at the base of the hill), the author has circled a potential candidate in an image of the battlefield from 14.7.43 in [Figures 7, 8, and 9](#), this tank far exceeds in size any other visible.⁶⁸ Had the Tiger been immobilized in the earlier fighting with the first echelon of the 170th Tank Brigade at the summit of Hill 241.6, then the damaged Tiger would have been recovered by the Germans. Clearly then the Tiger was lost during the later engagement with the 181st Tank Brigade.⁶⁹

After the final termination of Operation Citadel in the south on 16.7.43 and the abandonment of Operation Roland (the planned renewed push towards Oboyan), the II SS Panzer Korps was sent to the Mius front, the LSSAH & DR began leaving the front

⁶⁷Karl-Heinz Frieser, *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*, 182.

⁶⁸NARA Series RG 373: German Flown Aerial Photography, 1939–1945. See specifically photographs relating to the battlefield of Prokhorovka: for 14 July images, see; GX-2696-SK-23, GX-2696-SK-24 and GX-2696-SK-52.

⁶⁹Frieser, *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*, 127 & 127 n.

⁷⁰The references over the following paragraphs are from: 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; 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.

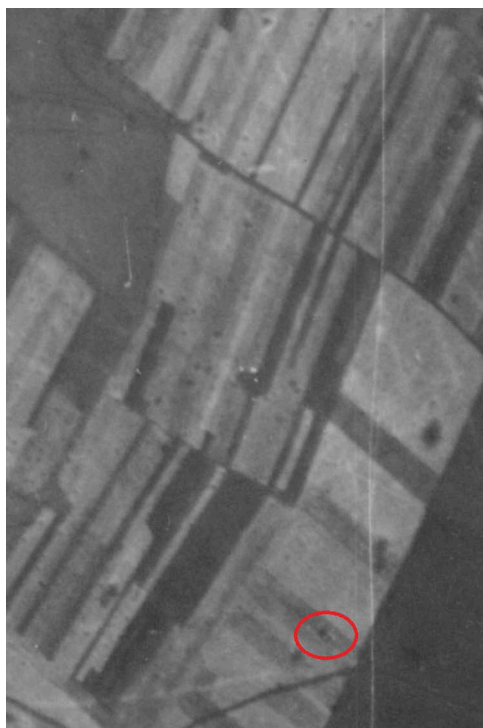


Figure 8. GX-2696-SK-52 14 July – Prokhorovka Battlefield; 181st Tank Brigade vs Tiger company on Hill 241.6 – The potential LSSAH Tiger is circled.

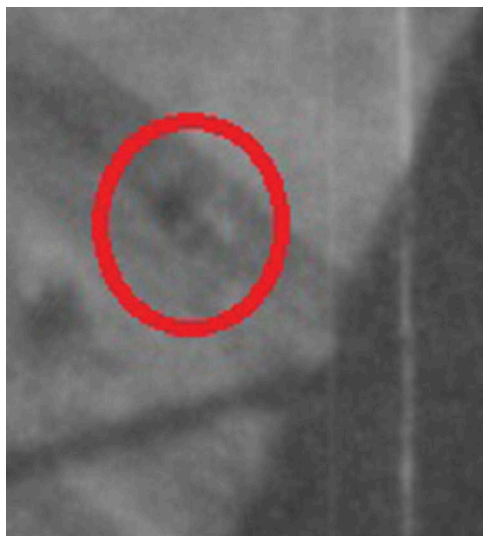


Figure 9. GX-2696-SK-52 14 July – Prokhorovka Battlefield; 181st Tank Brigade vs Tiger company on Hill 241.6 – The potential LSSAH Tiger is circled.

on 17.7.43.⁷⁰ Totenkopf, however, remained at the front longer, having been transferred to XXXXVIII Panzer Korps jurisdiction on 18.7.43. On its final day at the front, the LSSAH withdraw its front-line a few kilometres south along the Prokhorovka–Belgorod road and away from the notorious anti-tank ditch, Storozhevoye woods and beyond Komsomolets farm. This new position formed part of the new Attila line, which was the first of three designated lines which would form defensive fall back positions to allow the front to withdraw to its pre-Citadel positions near Belgorod in a controlled manner. The first line (Attila) was in effect a readjustment of the final Citadel frontline. The LSSAH final positions in the Attila line were centred on Hill 258.2, 1 km north of Teterevino, on the Prokhorovka–Belgorod road. Totenkopf frontage was then extended to this road to cover the LSSAH withdrawal. The 167th Infantry Division took over the positions of DR and linked with Totenkopf's right flank. Totenkopf, whose front at this stage still overlooked the immobilised LSSAH Tiger, finally completed a controlled evacuation of its Psel bridgehead in the early hours of 18.7.43; the division was even able to dismantle its bridging equipment as it withdrew. Totenkopf did not, however, immediately withdraw from the south bank of the river and remained on the Kozlovka to Andreyevka line into 18.7.43 (see [Figure 10](#)). As a result, Totenkopf's troops also continued to overlook the base of Hill 241.6 well into 18.7.43. This latter consideration is particularly important when one considers the potential fate of a LSSAH Tiger which was disabled during the battle of Prokhorovka in the late morning/early afternoon

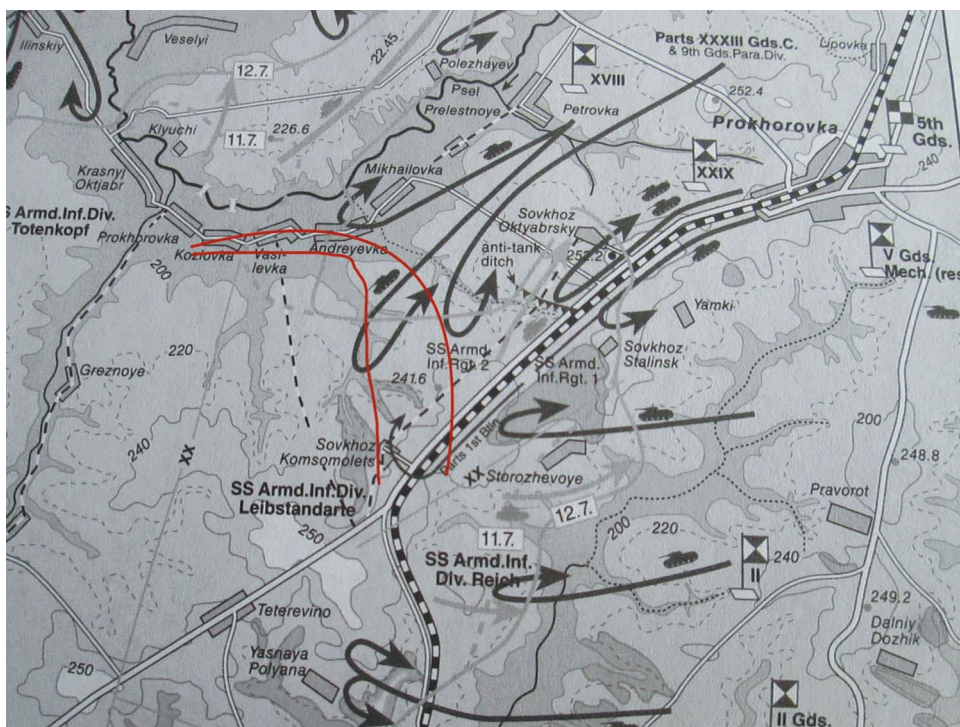


Figure 10. Totenkopf and Soviet positions near Andreyevka and Hill 241.6 on the morning of 18 July 1943, Source: adapted from Map II.IV.6., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

whilst advancing towards the ribbon village of Andreyevka on the southern slope Hill 241.6. The LSSAH Tiger remained close to friendly Totenkopf troops until 19.7.43. Totenkopf's continued proximity to Hill 241.6 on 18.7.43 can be judged by the fact that its troops were able to report on the build-up of enemy armour on the hill. Totenkopf faced enemy attacks on its positions throughout 18.7.43 from the direction of Vasilevka (next to Andreyevka) and Hill 241.6. The Soviet attack from Vasilevka did not begin until 12.30, it ran parallel and past the location of the LSSAH Tiger (the Tiger was still in no man's land up to this time). The attack which consisted of infantry and reportedly 60 tanks was aimed in the direction of Totenkopf's new front line which ran from Hill 258.2 then north to Hill/Point 231.5 (roughly where the 'K' in Komsomolets is in Figure 10) and then west to Greznoye. The Soviet attack in this sector was broken up by SS-T anti-tank guns which had been sighted on the northernmost extension of the new German front line on point 231.5, this position (which looked down on the ribbon villages and potentially the LSSAH Tiger) straddled the exit of the area's two dominating gullies which stretched up from Vasilevka. Totenkopf then from 14.30 counter-attacked and only withdrew from the area on the night of 18/19.7.43. The archival record simply doesn't allow for a more specific assessment of Totenkopf's operations to the north of Hill 258.2 on 18.7.43.

As we have seen, initial classifications of AFV in battlefield reports were often subject to amendments over time before they finally reached an accurate account; so it is extremely problematic to attribute complete accuracy to individual 10-day status and total loss reports. It is important to compare these types of reports over a period of time in order to get an accurate picture. The examples of reclassifications and inconsistencies that have already been raised highlight the need for caution in this regard. As no subsequent LSSAH, DR or SS-T 10-day status or divisional TF reports have survived for the period 11–20.7.43 (if indeed they were ever produced) it is the author's belief that it cannot be definitively determined whether or not a Tiger tank was lost as a result of damaged sustained during the battle of Prokhorovka on 12.7.43.

As the LSSAH Tiger would have remained close to Totenkopf's frontage until the 19.7.43, a timeframe which is outside the chronological range of the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report, it should not be seen as a surprise that such a precious tank as a Tiger would not yet be recorded as a TF in this report.

As a result of Totenkopf's continued proximity to Hill 241.6, it seems plausible that the immobilised LSSAH Tiger would not have been classified as total loss until the 19.7.43 at the earliest. Between 12–18.7.43 the LSSAH Tiger would not have been written off in case the situation at the front changed to allow a battlefield recovery to take place. During this time as neither Totenkopf nor the Soviets advanced to any great extent in this sector until after the former withdrew from the Attila line during the night of 18–19.7.43, a battlefield recovery would not have been possible as the difficulties raised in recovering the Tiger remained largely the same as on 12.7.43. In addition, even though 19.7.43 is the first realistic date that a LSSAH Tiger on Hill 241.6 could have been declared as a 3.b TF, there is no guarantee this administrative procedure would have been enacted immediately, particularly due to the complicating factor that the LSSAH and the II SS Panzer Korps HQ had already departed the area.

The case of the Totenkopf Tiger from the previous spring shows that it was possible for AFV to be removed from 'Ist' totals yet remain in divisional inventories.⁷¹ A Tiger's removal from the *Ist* total in a 10-day status report was one thing, but it did not always follow that the engineer would be willing to remove the Tiger from the inventory. At this point in time (spring/summer 1943), this may have been a unique policy for heavily damaged Tigers in the so-called *Sonderverbände* (the three divisions of the II SS panzer Korps and the Army's Grossdeutschland division) which would have been only too aware of a Tiger's expense, scarcity and battlefield supremacy in the first half of 1943.⁷² According to the 4th Panzer Army's MTO, the *Sonderverbände* had exclusive privileges such as, for example, having their own evacuation channel; perhaps this policy is another example of such privileges. What is known is that from the autumn of 1943 SS divisions such as DR were officially permitted to send AFV (not just Tigers) to homeland maintenance via the 2.c category, which meant AFV could now officially remain part of a division's inventory despite requiring Homeland Maintenance.⁷³ For example, in November 1943, a DR Tiger tank (250 219) was sent for homeland maintenance via the 2.c category.⁷⁴ This may well have been a de jure recognition of a long-running de facto operation. It is interesting to note the II SS Panzer Korps engineer's report from July 1943 only states that a LSSAH Tiger was '*Inst. Heimat*' (Homeland Maintenance) and not whether this was Homeland Maintenance via the category 3.a or 2.c.⁷⁵

The fact that 17 Tigers (the LSSAH began Operation Citadel with 13 Tigers and received 5 new Tigers on 25.7.43) were ultimately transferred from the LSSAH to DR (9) and SS-T (8) on 28.7.43 has previously been cited as a reason why only 1 LSSAH Tiger could have been lost during Operation Citadel.⁷⁶ The argument is that as one Tiger was already listed in the LSSAH 1–10.07.43 ten-day status report as 3.a (i.e. to be sent to Germany for homeland maintenance) and that one Tiger loss appears throughout AGS 5–17.7.43 *Totalverluste* reports, there is no possibility that another LSSAH Tiger was ultimately written off from damage sustained during the battle of Prokhorovka.⁷⁷ However, as the reader will now be aware, without viewing subsequent 10-day status and specific AFV TF reports through to 27–28.7.43, it is impossible to rule out the possibility that a LSSAH Tiger that was recorded as 3a (for Homeland Maintenance) in the 1–10.7.43 ten-day status report and AGS *Totalverluste* reports A). Against regulations, covertly remained in the LSSAH inventory; B). Was later reclassified as 2.c (homeland maintenance) and remained in the division's inventory; C) Was eventually deemed repairable in the *K-Werk* in category 2.c and as a result returned to the LSSAH inventory. As we have seen, Totenkopf's semi-

⁷¹See section above titled 'February – June 1943. The arrival of the SS Panzer Regiments on the Eastern Front and the origins of the battle of Prokhorovka'.

⁷²Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 162.

⁷³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.11.43, 30.11.43, 10.12.43, T313, R391.

⁷⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 30.11.43, T313, R391.

⁷⁵II 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.

⁷⁶PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605, F000879-80; See also Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, RH 10/64, General Inspector of Panzer Troops – AGS: 5–10.7.43 *Totalverluste*; 5–13.7.43 *Totalverluste*; 5–14.7.43 *Totalverluste*; 5–15.7.43 *Totalverluste*; 5–16.7.43 *Totalverluste*; 5–17.7.43 *Totalverluste*; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 182.

⁷⁷The historian Roman Töppel put this argument to the author via email correspondence in 2019.

submerged Tiger from early 1943 seems to at some stage have experienced all three such eventualities. In addition, as the Totenkopf Tiger 'returned' to the division's *Ist* total via the 4.a category (3.a AFV that had been repaired by homeland maintenance) the Tiger must have at some stage also been reclassified from 3.b to 3.a.⁷⁸

The 3.a LSSAH Tiger from the 1–10.7.43 ten-day status report was said to have been ordered to be cannibalised for spare parts between 5–10.7.43 (6.7.43 typically being the reported date).⁷⁹ However, it worth noting that prior to the start of Operation Citadel, the SS spare parts situation was said to 'not look bad'; while if spare parts were not available orders could be placed directly at the Army level. There was also a regular spares parts channel for rail and air transport (on 17.7.43 SS-T received Tiger tank spare parts via air transport). Troops even went, against regulations, straight to the Army Group level for spare parts (the LSSAH Tiger Company obtained two transmissions during Citadel via this route).⁸⁰ There is no mention of the Tiger in the LSSAH 5–10.7.43 TF report; though one would not expect this Tiger to be mentioned, it does confirm that the Tiger was not thought to be beyond repair.⁸¹ It is worth restating that AFV that did not *have* to be sent to the *K-Werk* or Homeland Maintenance (as their damage did not warrant such a classification) were so treated in times of overwork for the lower level field repair units.⁸² This latter consideration would make reclassifications even more likely, particularly if repairs were not considered as heavy as for a typical 3.a case. The LSSAH would have also transferred both operational and some non-operational tanks (including Tigers) to DR and SS-T. The chances are the transferred Pz III 77 604 was an example of the latter (the tank was at first considered to be a total loss during Citadel).⁸³ Finally, it must be remembered that the LSSAH engineer would have been loathed to remove any Tiger tank from the LSSAH's inventory; he would have given every opportunity to the possibility of further utilising these extremely expensive weapons.⁸⁴ Related to this point is the consideration that (after much vacillating on Hitler's part) it was not until 26.7.43 that the LSSAH received the order to depart for Italy. Up to this point the LSSAH's engineer would have had every incentive to keep as many Tiger tanks with the division as possible.⁸⁵ Even after the arrival of 5 new LSSAH Tiger tanks on 25.7.43, a pool of 17 Tigers was by no means excessive, being only 2 tanks above the heavy company's official establishment at this time.⁸⁶

Having reviewed the body of evidence as a whole, it seems clear that the possibility remains open that an irretrievable Tiger tank on the Prokhorovka battlefield was subsequently declared a 3.b (total loss) before the 28.7.43. This would have meant the "cannibalised" Tiger returning (if it had left) to the LSSAH inventory and an eventual 'Prokhorovka' 3.b' being declared between 19.7.43 (after the tank was left behind enemy

⁷⁸See section above titled 'February – June 1943. The arrival of the SS Panzer Regiments on the Eastern Front and the origins of the battle of Prokhorovka'.

⁷⁹Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 105.

⁸⁰Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 152–54, 162 and 166.

⁸¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43) T313, R390.

⁸²Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 16.

⁸³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR. Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391.

⁸⁴Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 8 and 180.

⁸⁵Frieser, *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*, 341.

⁸⁶Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 182; II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 52.

lines when Totenkopf withdrew from the vicinity of Hill 241.6) and 28.7.43 (the day the LSSAH handed over 17 Tigers to DR [9] and SS-T [8]).⁸⁷ This would certainly explain why German testimony, despite some records seemingly discounting the possibility, strongly indicated that a LSSAH Tiger tank was indeed lost as a result of damaged sustained during the battle of Prokhorovka.⁸⁸

The transfer of the LSSAH 'Prokhorovka' panzers on 28.7.43

When the II SS Panzer Korps finally arrived in 6th Army's sector on the Mius front the LSSAH and DR (the divisions having arrived via the 1st Panzer Army's front where they were expected to participate in a major mopping up operation-only for Hitler to cancel their participation on 24.7.43) once again joined forces with SS-T. However, on 26.7.43 the decision was taken to immediately send the LSSAH and later the rest of II SS Panzer Korps to Italy in the hope of stabilising the crumbling Fascist government and Axis partner. Ultimately, DR and SS-T would be required to remain on the Eastern Front as the situation around Kharkov would soon rapidly deteriorate. However, before the II SS Panzer Korps HQ also left for Italy, it was to oversee DR and SS-T's participation in an offensive against the Soviet Mius bridgehead which had been created following the diversionary Soviet offensive which had begun on 17.7.43.⁸⁹

In view of its impending departure on 26.7.43, the LSSAH was ordered to immediately hand over all its panzers to DR and SS-T.⁹⁰ It was planned that once in Italy the LSSAH would link up with its I panzer battalion (newly equipped with 71 Panthers) and receive a new complement of Pz IVs for its II panzer battalion. The handover was scheduled to take place on 28.7.43. The decision to initiate this transfer of the LSSAH tanks involved Hitler who on 26.7.43 ordered that the LSSAH leave behind all its tanks for DR and SS-T in order to boost their strength. The Chief of the Army General Staff Kurt Zeitzler expressed his concern that the LSSAH would not voluntarily hand over all its tanks – as we shall see Zeitzler's concerns were not without foundation. On 27.7.43, the LSSAH reported that it would pass on 11 Pz III, 69 Pz IV and 17 Tigers the following day. Taking into account the losses sustained during Citadel, we can see this meant that the LSSAH was refraining to transfer one Pz III and five Pz IV from its panzer regiment. Table 8 lists

⁸⁷ 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; 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.

⁸⁸ 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*, 127 n.

⁸⁹ 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*, 340–43.

⁹⁰ Helmut Heiber and David Glantz, *Hitler and his Generals: Military Conferences 1942–1945* (New York: Enigma Books 2004), Midday Situation Report, 26.7.1943, 225–26, 233–34, 248–49; Meeting of the *Führer* with Field Marshal von Kluge, 26.7.43, 260–61, 263, 265; 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; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfg. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH written 12.7.43) T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 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.

Table 8. LSSAH transfer of Panzers to Das Reich & Totenkopf 28.7.43.

	Lt Pz	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	6	12	74	12	9	32	22	12	6
LSSAH Inventory 25.7.43	6	12	74	17	9	32	22	12	6
Transferred to Das Reich on 28.7.43	0	4	39	9	0	0	0	0	0
Transferred to Totenkopf on 28.7.43	0	4	30	8	0	0	0	0	0
Transferred to II SS Pz Korps HQ on 28.7.43	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Retained by LSSAH in Italy	6	1	5	0	9	32	22	12	6
Das Reich Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	1	60	27	13	10	32	12	12	6
Das Reich Inventory 28.7.43 (following LSSAH additions)	1	64	66	22	10	32	12	12	6
Totenkopf Inventory 18.7.43 (following Citadel)	0	58	46	14	8	34	9	12	6
Totenkopf Inventory 28.7.43 (following LSSAH additions)	0	62	76	22	8	34	9	12	6

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; 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 Ia 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; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 182; 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*, 136. See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 5 LSSAH Tigers and 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns on Sturmpanzer website.

those tanks that the LSSAH transferred to its sister SS units on 28.7.43 and to what extent this bolstered Das Reich and Totenkopf inventories.

There are a number of ways we can substantiate that the LSSAH kept one Pz III and five Pz IV 'Prokhorovka' era tanks in its inventory apart from the simple mathematical calculation of panzers transferred added to panzers recorded as having been lost either TF or sent for homeland repair during Citadel. We can establish with confidence that four of the five retained Pz IV were significantly damaged and that they required extensive repairs that were assessed would take over 3 weeks to complete. Sadly the LSSAH produced no further inventory reports, so it is not possible to identify exactly which specific tanks remained with the LSSAH.

On 20.8.43, the LSSAH, by now in northern Italy, reported that it had 4 Pz II, 1 Pz III, 58 Pz IV, 71 Pz V (Panthers), 9 Pz Bef (command tanks) and 27 Tigers in its inventory.⁹¹ This included its returning I battalion with its mechanically troublesome Panthers and two companies of Tigers from the still forming Heavy SS Panzer Abteilung of the new I SS Panzer Korps LSSAH (The Tigers were used in a standard, but expanded, heavy company).⁹² The 1.9.43 LSSAH monthly Meldung (report) also shows that the division had retained its Prokhorovka era StuG and Pak Sf, plus received nine new StuH, and a further six new Pak Sf in addition to the four Pak Sf it had received in July after battle of Prokhorovka.⁹³ As Table 9 indicates, the LSSAH had received 53 new Pz IV in August for its II battalion.⁹⁴ On Hitler's orders, the LSSAH was not initially issued a full-strength Pz IV battalion, Hitler felt this was unnecessary as the division would be amply equipped with Tigers and Panthers.⁹⁵ No other new Pz

Table 9. LSSAH New AFV Deliveries July 1943–March 1944.

Estimated arrival date	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf
July	16	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)			
November	11			24 StuG (14 exchanged for newer models)	
December					
January	20	30 mid Jan & 14 late Jan		5 StuG	
February			5 late Feb		
March		3 (probably sent to the West)	6 (Used with XXXXVIII Pz Korps)		

Gen 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, 21.11.43, 2.12.43 & 10.12.43, T313, R391; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website.

⁹¹Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 136.

⁹²See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 71 LSSAH Panthers on Sturmpanzer website; Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 66–68.

⁹³Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43, T78, R719.

⁹⁴See August delivery report for 53 LSSAH Pz IV on Sturmpanzer website.

⁹⁵Heiber, Helmut & Glantz, David, *Hitler and his Generals: Military Conferences 1942–1945*, Midday Situation Report, 26.7.1943, 225–26, 233–34, 248–49; Meeting of the Führer with Field Marshal von Kluge, 26.7.43, 260–61, 263, 265.

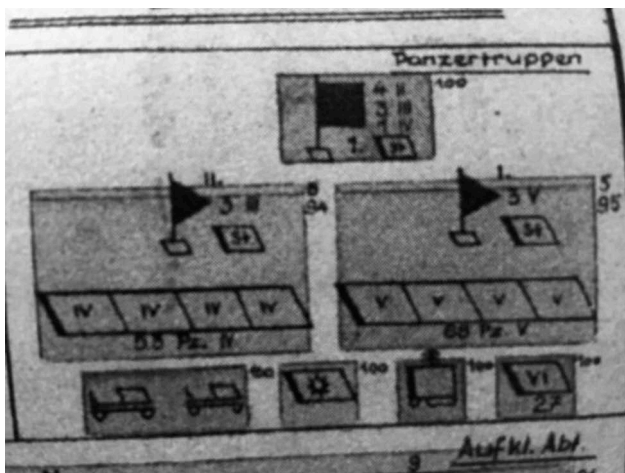


Figure 11. Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.10.43, T78, R719.

IV were sent to the LSSAH until October 1943 by which time the LSSAH was preparing for transfer back to the Eastern Front.⁹⁶ As a result, it is clear that the LSSAH retained five Pz IV.

Another indicator that the LSSAH retained some 'Prokhorovka' era Pz IV comes from the LSSAH monthly Meldung for 1.9.43 and 1.10.43 which, respectively, list 50 PzIV and 53 Pz IVs as being operational with the division, while also listing 4 Pz IV and 1 Pz IV, respectively, being repairable within 3 weeks.⁹⁷ This would seem to indicate that just one Pz IV was brought from the Eastern Front to Italy. The accompanying Order of Battle for SS Panzer Regiment 1 for 1.10.43 (see Figure 11) also lists (alongside the new shipment of 53 Pz IV) one Pz IV as belonging to the Panzer Regiment's staff together with the other Pz Bef (listed as Pz III) and four Pz II which were also retained by the LSSAH.⁹⁸

In fact, we know this Pz IV was the commander of the Panzer Regiment's own converted command tank which had the tactical number 055. Visual evidence of the ex 'Prokhorovka' command stab travelling through the unique surroundings of the Semmering Pass, on parade, and under repair can be found on the internet.⁹⁹ It seems clear, however, that the OB chart like the *Meldung* for 1.10.43 only included tanks which were operational or expected to return to action within 3 weeks.¹⁰⁰ Following 10.7.43 (during Citadel), the next surviving LSSAH 10-day status report dates from late 1.11.1943 as the LSSAH prepared to return to the Eastern Front.¹⁰¹ It reports the arrival of the next shipment of 29 Pz IVs for a collective *Ist* total of 87 Pz IVs, including 6 Pz IV which were under long-term

⁹⁶PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391.

⁹⁷Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43 & 1.10.43, T78, R719.

⁹⁸Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.10.43, T78, R719.

⁹⁹Images of these tanks heading to Italy can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html>.

¹⁰⁰Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.10.43, T78, R719.

¹⁰¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391.

repair (these latter tanks would not have all appeared in the previous Meldung reports). Clearly, the LSSAH had 58 Pz IV prior to these latest 29 additions; it is also clear that the LSSAH had the same Pz IVs in its inventory on 20.8.43 prior to the Meldung for September and October.¹⁰² Given our knowledge of the dates new tanks were received by the LSSAH during this period, it is clear that the August shipment of 53 Pz IV were additions to the original 5 'Prokhorovka' Pz IV which had not been transferred to DR and Totenkopf with the other 69 Pz IVs on 28.7.43.¹⁰³ As four of the five 'Prokhorovka' era Pz IV were not listed in the Meldung, there is little doubt they were undergoing long-term repair.¹⁰⁴ The visual evidence of 055 alone highlights that the precedent had been set for the LSSAH to retain small numbers of ex-'Prokhorovka' Pz IVs – clearly this was in defiance of Hitler's 26.7.43 command and confirmed Zeitzler's suspicions regarding the LSSAH.¹⁰⁵ The LSSAH 10-day status report from the start of November also lists the last remaining short-barrelled Pz III and the presence of the division's existing complement of StuG and tank destroyers.¹⁰⁶ As Table 9 indicates it was also during this period that the LSSAH received 24 new StuG and returned 14 of its original ex – 'Prokhorovka' complement. This further reduced the number of AFV which had been with the LSSAH during the battle of Prokhorovka. The LSSAH did not re-enter combat on the Eastern Front until mid-November 1943.¹⁰⁷

With regards to the transfer of 17 LSSAH Tiger tanks to Das Reich (9) and Totenkopf (8), it is interesting to note that 8 of the 9 Tigers received by Das Reich were pre-Citadel originals.¹⁰⁸ Therefore on 28.7.43, Das Reich only took possession of one of the new batch of five Tigers that the LSSAH had received on 25.7.43 (250 197 – which was most likely a command Tiger). Conversely, Totenkopf as a result had an even split of new (4) and original LSSAH Tigers (4). From a chronological perspective, we are fortunate that all nine of Das Reich's ex-LSSAH Tigers survived until the DR 31.10.43 inventory. This was the first DR inventory or 10-day status report (they were subsequently coupled together) to have survived since the division had returned to 4th Panzer Army control. This report has enabled the identification of these DR Tigers (see appendix) and as a consequence the makeup of Totenkopf's contingent of Tigers. Das Reich received no other new (factory new) Tigers between the 28.7.43 LSSAH transfer and the late October inventory (a scheduled October delivery of 5 did not arrive); so it is possible to identify DR's sole 'new' ex-LSSAH Tiger as 250 197 (received by

¹⁰²Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 136; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43 & 1.10.43, T78, R719.

¹⁰³II SS Panzer Korps, LSSAH, Rgt.Bef.Std., 27.7.43, T354, R607, F000825; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 667/43 & 668/43, 28.7.43, T354, R605.

¹⁰⁴Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.9.43 & 1.10.43, T78, R719.

¹⁰⁵Images of these tanks heading to Italy can be found on the following website: <https://www.thirdreichmedals.com/article/WSS.html>; Heiber, Helmut & Glantz, David, *Hitler and his Generals: Military Conferences 1942–1945*, Midday Situation Report, 26.7.1943, 225–26, 233–34, 248–49; Meeting of the *Führer* with Field Marshal von Kluge, 26.7.43, 260–61, 263, 265.

¹⁰⁶PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391.

¹⁰⁷Robert Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing 2016), 75–78.

¹⁰⁸PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH & DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 182.

LSSAH on 25.7.43) – Das Reich tended to list its AFV in its inventory by the chronological order it received them.¹⁰⁹ For example, it lists first its own Tigers received at the turn of 1942/43; then those DR received in May 1943; and only then the ex-LSSAH Tigers. The eight pre-Citadel ex-LSSAH Tigers are listed first followed by 250 197. The LSSAH cluster of Tiger tanks is not listed in order of age (DR did not know – or perhaps care – which tanks the LSSAH had received first in 1942/43); however, it would have been obvious to DR that 250 197 had as yet not seen combat. This therefore accounts for its position in the inventory. The 31.10.43 DR report also lists one other Tiger (250 147) which was received that month; the report states the Tiger was commandeered in October from an unspecified unit or source (we are fortunate that the report lists this detailed clarifying information).

The retreat to the Dnieper and the battle for the bridgeheads, August – November 1943

Following the successful, if relatively costly, completion of the German operation to eliminate the Mius bridgehead between 30.7–2.8.43, the II SS Panzer Korps HQ also departed for Italy. DR and Totenkopf (by now reinforced with ex-LSSAH panzers) would be rushed back to the Kharkov area in an attempt to stem the massive Soviet offensive Operation Rummyantsev that had been launched on 3.8.43.¹¹⁰ The offensive, designed to crush Army Group South's best formations and retake Kharkov, had rapidly broken through the German defences in-depth. Upon arrival, DR and SS-T, along with other significant armoured reinforcements, managed to form a new front north of Kharkov; despite this, the writing was on the wall for the German occupation of Kharkov and the Ukraine east of the Dnieper. On 12 August, III Panzer Korps with DR and SS-T counter-attacked and thus began a major armoured battle of attrition around Kharkov.

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 20 days, 5th Guard Tank Army 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

¹⁰⁹Full 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 & 30.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH & DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 1.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH & DR, Fahrgestell-Nr. Pz.kpf.Wg. 31.3.43, T313, R387; Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 416–18; Tigers 250 195 & 250 199 issued to Grossdeutschland in late June 1943 were both command tanks. By June 1943 new standard issue Tiger tank chassis numbers had already reached the 250 250–300 range. It seems highly likely that Tigers 250 195–199 were all command tanks which were held in reserve until such a Tiger was required by a unit. PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, GD, Anlage zur gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.8.43, T313, R390.

¹¹⁰Frieser, *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*, 341–43; For example, 2 SS-T Tiger tanks were lost in the four day Mius counter-offensive, see Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 205–06; 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* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017), 188–99.

Table 10. Das Reich Operational AVF Kharkov August 1943.

	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
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		

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

Table 11. Totenkopf Operational AVF Kharkov August 1943.

	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
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	?		

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

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

Das Reich (since 22.8.43 joined in combat by its freshly equipped Panther battalion) and Totenkopf like all German armoured forces engaged in the battle for Kharkov suffered a very significant number of damaged tanks.¹¹² Consequently, the repair services began to suffer from a chronic lack of spare parts (it is a misconception that this issue began during July 1943 – in fact during Citadel the repair troops reported good stocks of spare parts). By September, German operational AFV numbers had reached a pitiful level (see Table 12). This largely remained the case for German AFV on the Eastern Front until

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* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017), 188–99.

¹¹²Robert Forczyk, *Panther vs T-34: Ukraine 1943* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing 2007), 24–25, 61–63; Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 192; Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 152–54, 180.

Table 12. Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 September 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/ StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory	4	1	58	71	27	9	32/9	28	11	6
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	5	0	0	9	32/0	18	11	6
LSSAH Operational	?	?	50	65	20	?	28/9	28	?	?
Das Reich Inventory	?	51	58	66	19	?	28	8	12	4
DR Operational	?	3	10	21	2	?	5	7	?	?
Totenkopf Inventory	?	52-62	66-76	0	19	8	32	6-9	12	6
SS-T Operational	?	23	9	0	1	?	15	4	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, Übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391; 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; 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; Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 205-06.

Table 13. Totenkopf Operational AVF September 1943.

	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
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	?		

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

the spring of 1944. As a result from mid-August 1943 onwards, a damaged tank often meant an effective loss.

There is an excellent example of the difficulties faced by the German repair services. On 30.8.43, 8th Army reported that SS-T had 31 combat ready tanks and 124 tanks undergoing or awaiting repair, for a total of 155 panzers operational or out of service.¹¹³ Looking at Table 12, we can see that the Meldung of 1.9.43 reported 23 Pz III, 9 Pz IV and 1 Tiger as being operational with SS-T for a total of 33 operational panzers.¹¹⁴ The last known accurate SS-T inventory prior to this date is from 28.7.43 and can be seen in Table 8 (which takes into account the losses reported by the II SS Pz Korps engineer during Citadel and the transfer of LSSAH panzers to SS-T on 28.7.43); it states that including command panzers there was a total of 168 panzers with SS-T on this date (62 Pz III, 76 Pz IV, 22 Pz

¹¹³AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, Übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55.

¹¹⁴Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719.

Table 14. Das Reich New AFV Deliveries July 1943–March 1944.

Estimated arrival date	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)				
November	10				
December					
January					
February	17	10	5		3 (75 mm 38 t)
March					

Full 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 & 30.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 10.2.44, 20.2.44 & 29.2.44, T313, R408.

VI and 8 Bef).¹¹⁵ Given that we know that SS-T received no new tanks over this period (see Table 16) we can establish that SS-T had only lost 13 panzers as total write-offs (3 of which we know were Tiger tanks) between 28.7.43 and 30.8.43, a timeframe which included the division's participation in the Mius counter-offensive and the defence of Kharkov.¹¹⁶ Overall then, we can deduce a minimum of 57 SS-T Pz IV were awaiting repair around 1.9.43. The next available inventory for SS-T (again prepared by 8th Army) is from 5.10.43 which only reported a total of 26 Pz IV (3 of which were operational) with the division.¹¹⁷ We can see from Table 13 that SS-T operational panzer numbers did not improve; therefore, it is clear that during September, SS-T either abandoned its disabled Pz IV in its retreat to the Dnieper or sent them back to Germany for homeland maintenance, either way 50 Pz IV were lost to SS-T by 5.10.43. Clearly, many of these losses would have been former 'Prokhorovka' LSSAH Pz IV.¹¹⁸

The number of operational tanks available to DR and SS-T on 1.9.43 compared to those in Table 3 during July (Citadel and its aftermath) clearly shows that DR and SS-T were now under severe pressure, with their repair services struggling to bring damaged AFV back to operational status.¹¹⁹ From now on this would be the rule on the Eastern Front rather than the exception. Although the three 'classic' SS divisions were known to be treated as *Sonderverbände*, in reality this seemed to make little difference to the Germans' ability to return AFV to the frontline. Other than DR Panther battalion the

¹¹⁵PzAOK 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; 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; Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 182; 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*, 136. See June/July 1943 delivery reports for 5 LSSAH Tigers and 4 LSSAH self-propelled guns on Sturmpanzer website.

¹¹⁶Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website. Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 205–06.

¹¹⁷Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

¹¹⁸XI Korps, 1a Anlagen z. KTB Band 13, SS-T Tagesmeldung, 15–21.9.43 & 28–30.9.43, T314, R493.

¹¹⁹Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.9.43, T78, R719.

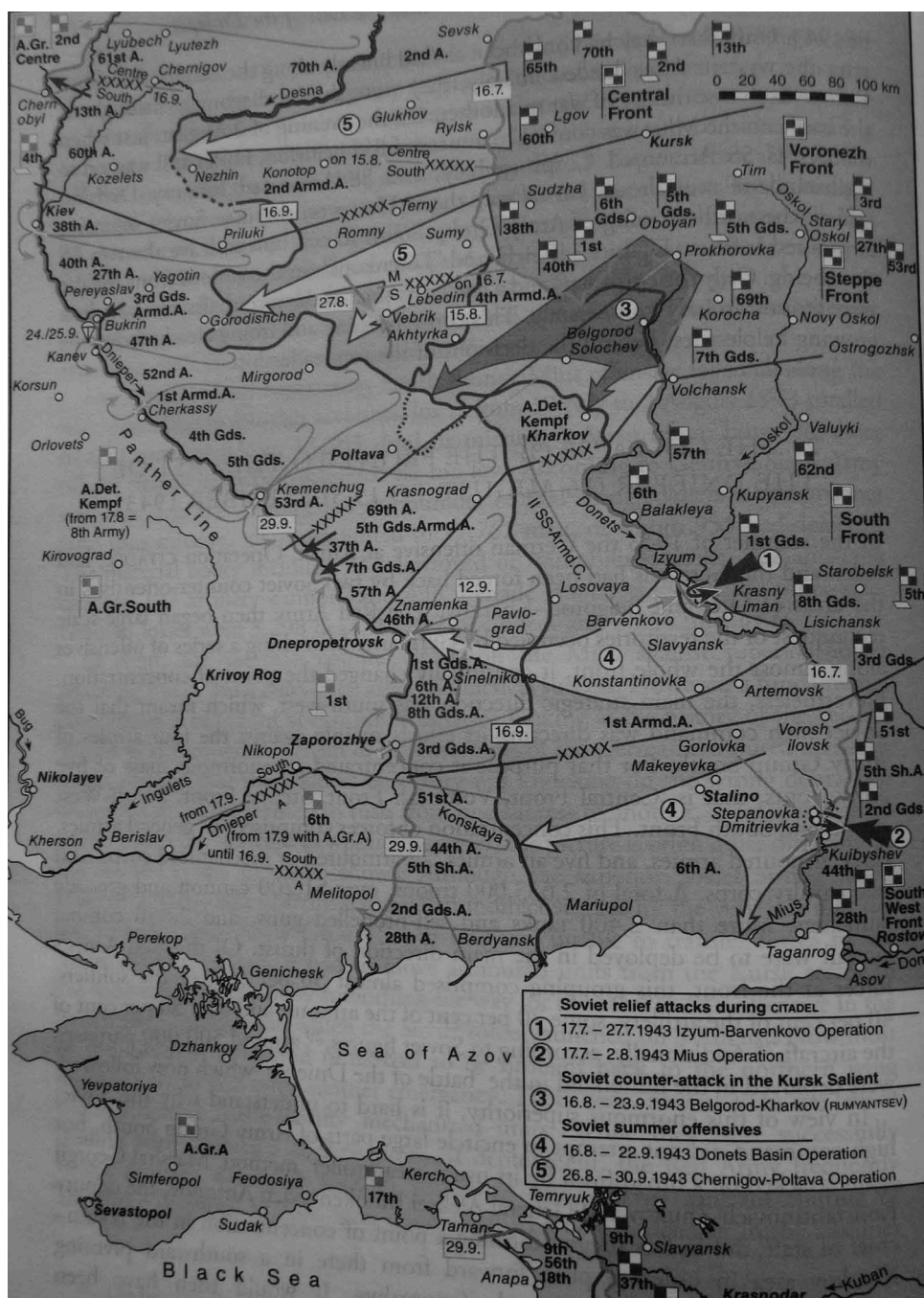


Figure 12. Army Group South's withdrawal operations to the Dnieper (17 July to 29 September 1943), Source: Map IV.III.1., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

only other reinforcements either DR or SS-T received during this period were 10 new Pz IV (also for DR) which arrived in August. For a full breakdown of the new reinforcements DR received between 1.7.43 and 31.3.44, see [Table 14](#).

Although the fighting had cost the Soviets dearly in terms of tank losses, the Germans own AFV losses, even if relatively light in terms of total losses, were unsustainable, particularly when considering the appalling level of AFV operational readiness and the limited available replacements. Following the fall of Kharkov, it proved possible to only delay a general retreat to more defensible positions on the Dnieper (the Panther Line). Hitler finally gave permission to this withdrawal on 15.9.43. Although logistically the Germans achieved the difficult task of withdrawing their forces intact behind the Dnieper and then creating a continuous frontline, they were not successful in stopping the Soviets from forming numerous bridgeheads across the river.¹²⁰

Although the whole of the Eastern Front was by now under Soviet attack, Stavka's main focus was still against Army Group South's four armies. Stavka concentrated an enormous mass of five army fronts against Army Group South, namely Central Front, Voronezh Front, Steppe Front, South-West Front and South Front. This concentration of forces comprised 27 general armies, 3 tank armies, 5 air armies, 22 tank or mechanized corps, and 2 cavalry corps. A total of 2,633,000 troops, over 51,200 cannon and grenade launchers, more than 2,400 tanks and self-propelled guns, and 2,850 combat aircraft were to be deployed in the main direction of thrust. Of the Red Army's forces at the front, this grouping comprised almost 50% of the soldiers, 40% of the artillery, some 70% of the armour and over 50% of the aircraft. Additionally, according to Soviet figures, around 500,000 partisans were deployed in the hinterland in the battle of the Dnieper which followed.¹²¹

In the south between 13.8.43 and 22.9.43, South and South-West Front attacked 6th Army and 1st Panzer Army. In pushing the Germans back to the Dnieper, the Soviets officially lost 273,522 men, of whom 66,166 dead or missing together with 886 tanks and assault guns. Following the loss of Kharkov, 8th Army was attacked by Steppe Front from 26.8.43 to 30.9.43, while 4th Panzer Army was attacked by Voronezh Front and elements of Central Front. According to Soviet Official figures, the attackers lost 427,952 men of whom 102,957 dead or missing together with 1,140 tanks.¹²²

By the end of September, the retreat to the Dnieper had been completed; of the 1,953 available panzers on the Eastern Front, only 605 were operational.¹²³ DR and SS-T had both withdrawn across the Dnieper at Kremenchug. DR then moved north of Kremenchug while Totenkopf headed south, under the control of 8th Army and 1st Panzer Army, respectively.¹²⁴ As a consequence of the German

¹²⁰Frieser, 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*, 356–58.

¹²¹This paragraph is used with permission of OUP. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear. 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), 343.

¹²²*Ibid.*, 351–53.

¹²³Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 110.

¹²⁴Frieser, 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*, 344; Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 36.

Table 15. Former ‘Citadel’ SS Divisions AFV Strength 5 October 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/ StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory (1.10.43)	4	1	58	71	27	9	32/9	28	11	6
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	5	0	0	9	32/0	18	11	6
LSSAH Operational (1.10.43)	?	1	53	60	21	?	30/9	28	?	?
Das Reich Inventory (5.10.43)		27	52	53	19	4	24-27	?	?	?
DR Operational (5.10.43)		2	1	1	0	4	13	7	?	?
Totenkopf Inventory (5.10.43)		50	26	0	23	8	25-32	?	?	?
T Operational (5.10.43)		6	3	0	5*	5	0	3	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, 1.10.43, T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, Übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391; 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; II SS Panzer Korps, DR & SS-T Ia 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; Totenkopf's five operational Tigers were all from a recently arrived new delivery. It should be noted that the '1.10.43' OB chart for DR which partners the accurate 1.10.43 DR Meldung in the archives is actually dated as giving the DR inventory for 5.9.43 (for example the OB chart states 38 PzIII were on hand as opposed to 27). Further evidence that this is not a DR OB chart for 1.10.43 can be seen by the fact that the five other divisional inventories listed in the Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43 report (SS-T, 11 Pz, SS-W, 3 Pz & 19 Pz) all recorded near identical numbers of tanks on 5.10.43 and 1.10.43 in their respective Meldung or OB chart, see Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Heer monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, 1.10.43, T78, R616. On the other hand the DR inventory in the 5.10.43 AOK 8 report closely match that found in its inventory in PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung for 20-31.10.43. There is also an error with the 5.9.43 DR OB chart data (as this article's appendix indicates), DR inventory did not decline to the reported 17 Tigers in September or indeed October. In reality 4 DR Tigers were lost between 28.7.43 & 20.10.43 - 3 of which occurred prior to 5.10.43, there were no replacement Tigers of any kind (4a or 4b) received by DR between 28.7.43 & 20.10.43.

Table 16. Totenkopf New AFV Deliveries July 1943–March 1944.

Estimated arrival date	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		
November	5				11 (75 mm 38 t)
December					
January					
February					
March					

Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, Übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

retreat on 26.9.43, the *K-Werk* at Dnepropetrovsk was forced to relocate to Berdichev and ultimately the following month to Zhitomir. The Army level Pz

Inst Abteilung 545 was moved to Uman and Pz Inst Abteilung 525 was moved to Krivoy Rog.¹²⁵

As we have noted, it is unfortunate that no relevant MTO files have survived for the 8th Army and 1st Panzer Army during this period. Nevertheless, it is still possible by utilising SS divisional monthly Meldung to give operational AFV numbers and those expected to return from repair within 3 weeks for the SS divisions within these armies.¹²⁶ Although these figures do not give us the exact numbers of ex Prokhorovka AFV that remained in the inventories of the SS divisions at this time (the AFV undergoing the very longest repairs were not recorded), they are still very useful. The Meldung for DR even gives the monthly total of tanks in its inventory by type in its attached OB charts. Sadly, the Totenkopf equivalents do not list the number of tanks in their inventory. The only surviving official document that gives the total number of tanks per type in SS-T post-Citadel inventory (DR is also included) is a report by 8th Army dated 5.10.43.¹²⁷ The document tells us that the reported AFV delivery reports to both DR and SS-T up to this date are accurate.¹²⁸ The shipment reports confirm that Totenkopf did not receive any reinforcements until this date – its first replacements being five Tigers received between 1–5.10.43. As we have already noted, the report also confirms that since 30.8.43 SS-T had suffered heavily in terms of Pz IV total losses.

After taking up position on the Panther line on 29.9.43, Army Group South (now minus 6th Army which was transferred to Army Group A's control in mid September) had to defend 700 km of front with three armies against several Soviet fronts. These were Voronezh Front, Steppe Front and South-West Front, renamed 1st, 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Front, respectively, on 20.10.43. In addition, the army group's northern wing was attacked by parts of Central Front (from 20.10.43 renamed Belorussian Front), and its southern wing by several armies of South Front (4th Ukrainian Front). In all, the battered Army Group South had a total of 719,000 men (which equated to only about 1,000 men per km) and 271 operational tanks and assault guns available to face this Soviet colossus.¹²⁹

In the first few days of October, DR (with virtually no operational panzers) crushed the small Soviet bridgehead at Gerbeni. Following this, on 10.10.43, DR attacked the Rzhishchev bridgehead with limited success. Then, on 21.10.43, DR was heavily involved in halting the second of Vatutin's attempts to achieve a major break out of the Bukrin bridgehead; however, DR's strong defensive positions inflicted large casualties on the Soviets, on 3rd Tank Army in particular.¹³⁰ It was during this period (20–31.10.43) that

¹²⁵Lukas, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 174.

¹²⁶Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, See in particular those for LSSAH, DR & SS-T from 1.9.43 to 15.4.44, T78, R719.

¹²⁷Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

¹²⁸Full delivery reports for all panzer, assault gun and self-propelled gun types are available from the Sturmpanzer website; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836.

¹²⁹Frieser, 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*, 361–62.

¹³⁰Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 58–59, 63.

DR reported that it had commandeered an additional Tiger tank (250 147) from an unspecified unit or source.¹³¹

Meanwhile, Totenkopf between 15–25.10.43 attempted to hold together the northern flank of the huge salient that had been created by the Soviet offensive out of the Mishurin Rog bridgehead. This offensive (with the, once again, reequipped 5th Guards Tank Army in the vanguard) successfully attacked the seam between 1st Panzer Army and 8th Army and effected a breakout. On 28.10.43, Totenkopf along with Grossdeutschland participated in a short counter-offensive that blunted any immediate hope of the (by now overextended) 5th Guard's Tank Army reaching Krivoy Rog.¹³² These operations were part of the Soviets overall Lower Dnieper Offensive Operation (26.9–20.12.43) in which 1,500,000 men, 1,160 tanks and assault guns were deployed. The Soviets after regular resupply lost 2,639 tanks and assault guns during the overall offensive which for much of its course focused on 1st Panzer Army.¹³³

Kiev's liberation and subsequent German counter-attacks, November–December 1943

On 3.11.43 having secretly shifted the 3rd Tank Army from Bukrin to the Lyutezh bridgehead north of Kiev (which had been expanded at great cost to 15 km wide and 5 to 10 km deep the previous month), Vatutin launched a major offensive to take Kiev. In the Kiev Strategic Offensive Operation (3–13.11.43) 1st Ukrainian Front deployed 671,000 men and 675 tanks and self-propelled guns, it would lose according to official figures 30,569 men, of whom 6,491 dead or missing and 271 tanks.¹³⁴ The offensive quickly overcame the weak German defence on the south side of the bridgehead and Soviet forces were able to charge headlong for Kiev. On 6.11.43, Kiev fell to the Soviets, the Germans full attention was now focused on trying to save 4th Panzer Army from annihilation. The Soviet offensive was now in full flow, by 7.11.43 the important railhead at Fastov was captured greatly disrupting German plans to introduce major armoured reinforcements from the West; these included the LSSAH, the reequipped 1st Panzer Division and the inexperienced 25th Panzer Division. Most of these reinforcements (like LSSAH) had originally been scheduled for deployment with 8th Army around Kirovograd (the LSSAH had already detrained); however, they were now rerouted north to 4th Panzer Army with orders to detrain at Belaya Tserkov and Berdichev. For this reason, 4th Panzer Army could not afford for these railheads to also fall into Soviet hands. As a result, DR was sent to Belaya Tserkov to protect this vital railhead – primarily so that the 25th Panzer Division and the 509th Heavy Tiger Abteilung could join the battle as quickly as possible.

¹³¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391.

¹³²Frieser, *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*, 377–79.

¹³³*Ibid.*, 374.

¹³⁴Frieser, *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*, 366–69, 346; Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 74–75.

**Table 17.** Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 November 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory (1.11.43)	4	1	87	85	27	9	41/9	26	11	6
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	5	0	0	9	17/0	16	11	6
LSSAH Operational AFV 1.11.43	2	1	75	22	17	9	33/9	13	9	4
Das Reich Inventory (31.10.43)	0	28	46	52	19	6	23	1	12	6
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	28	39	0	17	6	23	1 (7 under major repair)	12	6
		(24 & 4)	(15 & 24)		(9 & 8)					
DR Operational AFV (31.10.43)	0	3	8	0	3	3	8	0	10	1
Totenkopf Inventory (1.11.43)	?	16-50	33-36	0	11-23	?	25-32	5-9	?	?
Totenkopf Operational (1.11.43)	?	9	19	0	4	?	5	5	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.11.43, T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand: 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsabteilung für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1-10.7.43 (LSSAH witten 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen witten 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5-18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (witten 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; 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.

Table 18. 1 November 1943 – Surviving AFV from the Battle of Prokhorovka.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	5	0	0	9	17/0	16	11	6
DR AFV known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	28 (24 & 4)	39 (15 & 24)	0	17 (9 & 8)	6	23	8 (7 under major repair)	12	6
Totenkopf AFV known to be in LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	Max of 4	Max of 26	0	Max of 4	0	0	0	0	0
Combined total of surviving German AFV on 1.11.43 which were in LSSAH & DR inventories for the battle of Prokhorovka	0	29-33	44-70 (this will be ca 55)	0	17-21 (this will be ca 19-20)	15	40	24	23	12
Combined German inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	73	110	22	25	19	66	31	24	12

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.11.43, T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand: 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsabteilung für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 31.10.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfwg. und gep. Kfz. 1-10.7.43 (LSSAH witten 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen witten 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5-18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (witten 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; 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.

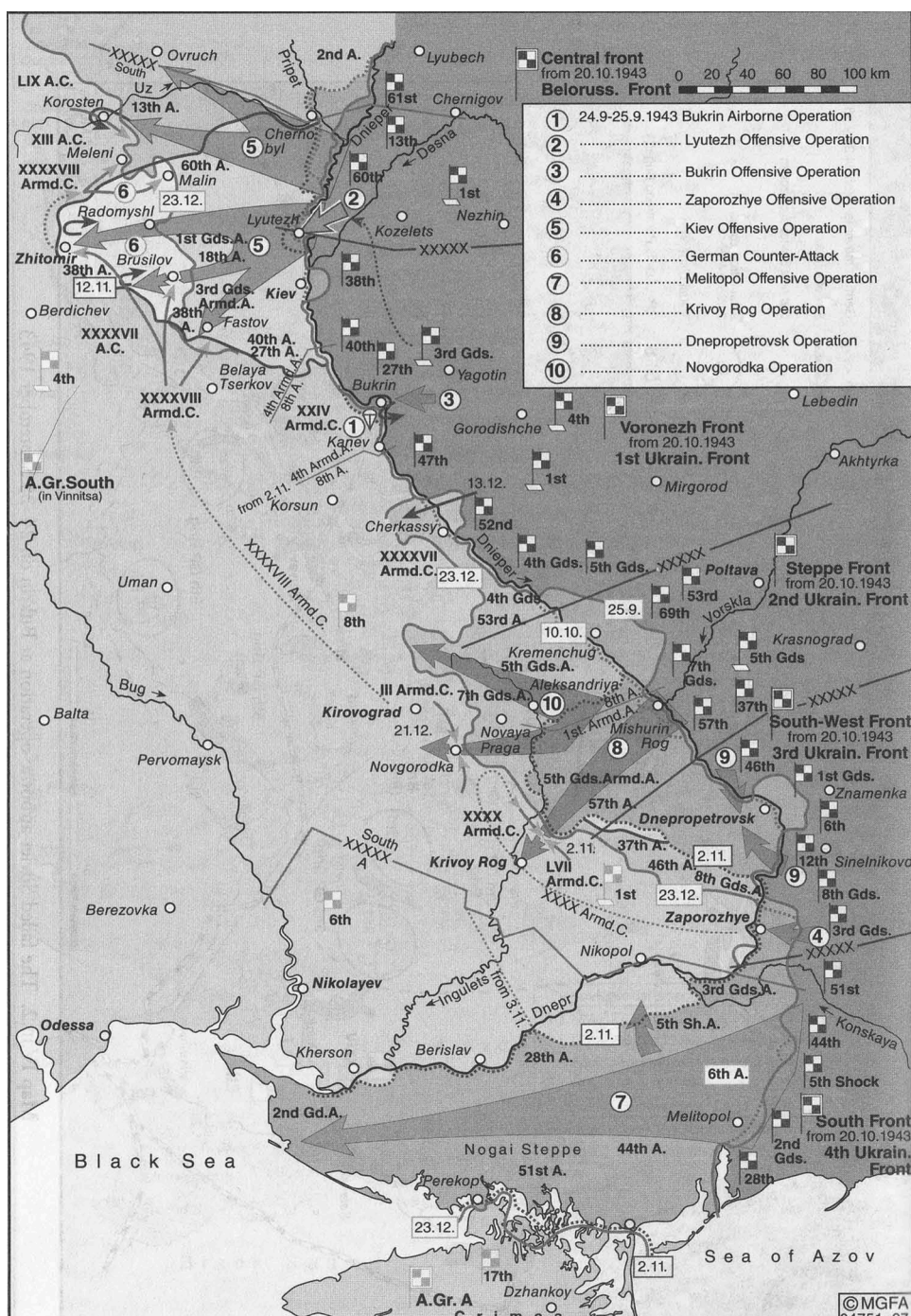


Figure 13. Army Group South's battles for the Dnieper Line (29 September to 23 December 1943), Source: Map IV.III.3., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Table 19. LSSAH & Das Reich Strength 10 November 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	87-95	85	27	9	41/9	26	11	6
LSSAH Operational	4	1	5	0	0	9	17/0	16	11	6
Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	0	22	45	50	19	6	23	1	12	6
	0	22 (18 & 4)	35 (13 & 22)	0	17 (9 & 8)	6	23	1 (7 under major repair)	12	6
DR Operational	0	2	15	0	5	4	11	0	9	2

PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.11.43 & 21.11.43, T313, R391; 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; 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.

Table 20. LSSAH & Das Reich Strength 20 November 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	4	1	87	85	25	9	41/9	24	11	6
Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	2	1	18	10	12	9	29/6	12	9	4
	0	17	50	45	16	6	23	9	12	6
	0	17 (13 & 4)	31 (12 & 19)	0	15 (8 & 7)	6	23	8	12	6
DR Operational	0	3	19	6	7	4	8	0	8	2

PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 21.11.43, T313, R391; 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; 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.

The LSSAH began to arrive in 4th Panzer Army's area of command on 11.11.43 having (along with the 1st Panzer Division) conducted a time-consuming additional transport north. It would finally enter combat on 14–15.11.43.¹³⁵ However, other vital supply, communication and transportation hubs soon came under threat. The towns of Korosten, Zhitomir and Vinnitsa were all politically and militarily important to the Nazi leadership; Goring, Himmler & Hitler, respectively, all had expensively (and barbarically) constructed command centres close to these towns. Regardless, the vital rail junction Zhitomir fell on 12.11.43 which caused a disastrous disruption to the transportation of supplies. The *K-Werk* in the town was evacuated and ultimately re-established in ideal conditions at a facility in Sanok west of Lemberg (Lvov) in the General Government (truncated Poland). Korosten also fell on 17.11.43; in some sectors, the Soviets advanced 150 km west in 10 days. The result was that this took the hard-pressed Germans attention away again from Fastov northwards towards the Zhitomir and Brusilov area. On 15.11.43, the LSSAH along with 1st Panzer Division were ordered to use their considerable offensive power to recapture Zhitomir. DR and 25th Panzer Division protected the right flank of the advance and despite mud proving a severe hindrance Zhitomir was retaken by German forces on 19.11.43. Further to the north, the Germans also recaptured Korosten on 27.11.43.

Following the German counter-offensive which had the extremely ambitious target of Kiev as its ultimate objective, a LSSAH TF report declared that between the start of the offensive and 28.11.43 (the main effort of the offensive ended on this day) the following AFV losses occurred; 12 Pz IV, 8 Pz V, 2 VI, 1 StuG and 3 Pak Sf.¹³⁶ This gives a total of 26 AFV TF in 14 days of offensive combat. This loss figure is 8 more AFV losses than the LSSAH suffered during Operation Citadel which was fought over a nearly identical timeframe of 13 days in the LSSAH case.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, the numbers of losses are still similar for an offensive. What is also noticeable is that the number of operational Pz IV fielded by the LSSAH following the battle of Prokhorovka in the evening 13.7.43 (the effective end date of LSSAH operations during Citadel) was 31.¹³⁸ While on 2.12.43, following the conclusion of the Germans 'Kiev' counter-offensive 30 Pz IV were operational.¹³⁹ The LSSAH started each offensive with a similar number of Pz IV, 83 for commencement of Citadel and 87–95 for the commencement of the 'Kiev' counter-offensive.¹⁴⁰ The major difference was that after the latter offensive there was no quite

¹³⁵Frieser, *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*, 369–70, 346; Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 77–78; Friedli, *Repairing the Panzers: German Tank Maintenance in World War 2*, 138–40, 176; Wendy Lower, *Nazi Empire-Building and the Holocaust in Ukraine* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 2005), 174. Between October 1943 and early January 1944, the FHQ in Vinnitsa was used by Manstein as AGS' HQ.

¹³⁶PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 20.11.43, Losses cover at least 19–28.11.43, (written 5.12.43) T313, R391; Frieser, *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*, 371–72.

¹³⁷II 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.

¹³⁸Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 187.

¹³⁹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 2.12.43, T313, R391.

¹⁴⁰Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 46; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 21.11.43 & 2.12.43, T313, R391.

Table 21. Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 December 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	4	1	76	80	25	9	37/9	22	10	6
	2	0	30	27	2	9	11/1	14	5	3
Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	17	49	44	16	6	23	9	12	6
DR Operational	0	17 (13 & 4)	31 (12 & 19)	0	15 (8 & 7)	6	23	8	12	6
	0	5	6	16	3	3	8	0	4	1
Totenkopf Operational & repair expected within 3 weeks (StuG inventory)										
Totenkopf Operational	10	10	24	0	12	?	25-32	?	?	?
	3	3	3	0	1	?	7	2	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.12.43, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 30.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 2.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfw. 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; 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.

Table 22. 1 December 1943 – Surviving AFV from the Battle of Prokhorovka.

	Lt Pz	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	Max of 5	0	0	9	13-17	12-16	10	6
DR AFV known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	17 (13 & 4)	31 (12 & 19)	0	15 (8 & 7)	6	23	8	12	6
Totenkopf AFV known to be in LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	Max of 4	Max of 26	0	Max of 4	0	0	0	0	0
Combined total of surviving German AFV on 1.12.43 which were in LSSAH & DR inventories for the battle of Prokhorovka	4	18-22	31-62 (this will be ca 42)	0	15-19 (this will be ca 17-18)	15	36-40	20-24	22	12
Combined German inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	73	110	22	25	19	66	31	24	12

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, DR & SS-T, 1.12.43, T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, Übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand; 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 30.11.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 2.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfw. 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; 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.

period to conduct repairs (if the parts were indeed available) as a result operational levels only continued to reduce. This was something the other panzer units of Army Group South had been experiencing since mid-August. In its supporting role during this period, DR lost a maximum of five Pz III (2–3.a), six Pz IV (2–3.a), six Pz V, three Pz VI and one StuG.¹⁴¹ It is clear that even in late 1943, for the Germans, substantial offensive operations were far less costly in terms of TF than major defensive operations. In the course of the wider operations in the area from 9.11.43 to 28.11.43 4th Panzer Army claimed to have destroyed 603 Soviet tanks.¹⁴²

During this period, the Germans were often forced to conduct armoured battles in highly unsuitable wooded terrain or adverse weather conditions which negated their AFV technical superiority. Consequently, German AFV losses began to mount, once again particularly in terms of damaged tanks.¹⁴³ The Soviets at this time still relied heavily on the T-34/76 (76 mm main gun) which was inferior to most German AFV in terms of protective armour and weaponry, the exception being the Pz III (which was no longer in production and being phased out). The next generation of Soviet tanks, such as the IS II (122 mm main gun) and more importantly the T-34/85 (85 mm main gun), would start to be introduced in sizeable numbers the following spring. After the 30.11.43, the German counter-attack was paused to allow troops to rest and the ground to harden.

On 6.12.43, after the ground had frozen, the Germans launched Operation Advent. By 13.12.43, Radomyshl was retaken and attacks followed close to Korosten and Malin. The LSSAH and DR were both involved in this offensive.¹⁴⁴

On 18.12.43, the LSSAH along with 1st Panzer Division and 7th Panzer Division broke through the Soviet frontline in depth between Meleni and Amlin. However, it soon became clear that pursuing an encirclement operation in this sector was unfeasible due to fact that the attacking units were about to potentially encircle a massive Soviet grouping which reportedly consisted of three tank corps and four rifle corps. The Germans had no hope of containing such a large force. This episode highlights that the Germans no longer possessed the armoured reserves necessary to exploit successes at the operational level. As a result of this discovery on 22.12.43, the German counter-attacks were rapidly brought to a close. When one looks at the number of operational AFV available to the LSSAH for offensive operations in Tables 23 and 24, it is hardly surprising the operation was not pursued further.¹⁴⁵

Renewed Soviet Offensives: The crushing of the SS' AFV in the East, December 1943–April 1944

By 23.12.43, the Red Army had lost 1,687,164 men in the battle of the Dnieper, of whom 417,323 were dead or missing. Yet its human and material reserves seemed inexhaustible.

¹⁴¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.11.43 & 30.11.43, T313, R391.

¹⁴²Frieser, *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*, 370.

¹⁴³Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 78, 83–85; 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*, 162.

¹⁴⁴Frieser, *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*, 370–71, 346.

¹⁴⁵*Ibid.*

Table 23. LSSAH & Das Reich Strength 10 December 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	4	1	69	76	24	9	37/9	20	10	6
Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	1	0	12	5	4	3	10/4	7	4	3
DR Operational	0	14	50	44	16	6	23	9	11	6
	0	14 (11 & 3)	31 (12 & 19)	0	15 (8 & 7)	6	23	9	12	6
	0	0	3	3	3	2	13	0	4	1

PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.12.43, T313, R391; 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; 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.

Table 24. LSSAH & Das Reich Strength 20 December 1943.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	3	1	66	74	23	8	35/9	19	10	6
Kampfgruppe Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	1	0	9	7	3	2	17/6	4	0	1
DR Operational	0	0	22	20	8	2	12	?	?	?
	0	0	9 (4 & 5)	0	7 (2 & 5)	2	12	?	?	?
	0	0	15	10	4	2	10	?	?	?

PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 20.1.44 & 1.2.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; 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; 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.

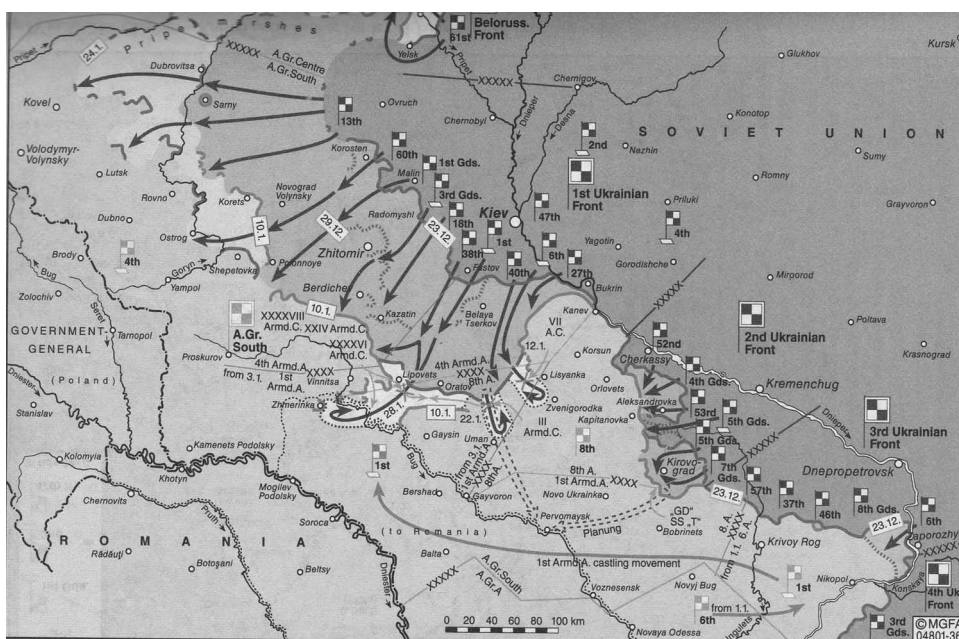


Figure 14. The Soviet offensives in the area of Zhitomir and Kirovograd at the turn of 1943/4, Source: Map IV.III.4., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

The same could hardly be said of the German forces. As a result of the lack of replacement personnel, Army Group South had only 328,397 men available at the end of December 1943, plus 109,816 men serving in Allied and foreign units. Although Manstein's army group numbered as many 14 panzer divisions, it had only 199 operational tanks ready for action. It was also clear to the Germans that they were about to face a major Soviet offensive.¹⁴⁶

The offensive erupted on 24.12.43 and lasted, depending on how the endpoint is defined, until 17.4.44 or 6.5.44, and under its weight the front collapsed almost straight away. That day Army Group South was subjected to one of the most powerful offensives of the war. Four Soviet Fronts – 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Ukrainian Fronts – were ranged against it. Not counting the troops deployed against the Crimea, the four army fronts started the offensive with 2,230,000 men, 28,654 cannon and grenade launchers, 2,015 tanks and assault guns, and 2,600 combat aircraft. In the course of the operation, the following units were brought in and added to the forces deployed: 2nd Belorussian Front HQ; the operations staff of 47th, 61st and 70th Armies, and of 2nd 4th and 6th Tank Armies; six tank corps, two mechanized corps, and 33 divisions, as well as 6th Air Army. The enormous scale of the reinforcements is shown by the fact that while 2,015 fighting vehicles were available at the start of the offensive, the number lost in the course of the

¹⁴⁶Frieser, *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*, 379–80.

**Table 25.** Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 January 1944.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	4	1	58	53	21	8	35/8	15	8	6
*Kampfgruppe Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	14	7	2	2	6/3	5	5	5
Totenkopf Operational & expected repair within 3 weeks										
Totenkopf Operational	0	0	22	20	8	2	12	?	?	?
	0	0	9 (4 & 5)	0	7 (2 & 5)	2	12	?	?	?
	0	22	27	0	10	?	17	11	?	?
	0	7	8	0	2	?	7	4	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH & SS-T, 1.1.44 (LSSAH 31.12.43), T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 20.1.44 & 1.2.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.1.44, T313, R408; 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; 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. *Due to a lack of reporting of DR figures for 1.1.44 will almost certainly be closer to those of 10.1.44.

Table 26. 1 January 1944 – Surviving AFV from the Battle of Prokhorovka.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	max of 5	0	0	8	11-17	4-15	8	6
*DR AFV known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	9 (4 & 5)	0	7 (2 & 5)	2	12	?	?	?
Totenkopf AFV known to be in LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	Max of 4	Max of 26	0	Max of 4	0	0	0	0	0
Combined total of surviving German AFV on 1.1.44 which were in LSSAH & DR inventories for the battle of Prokhorovka	4	1-5	9-40 (this will be ca 20)	0	7-11	10	23-29	?	?	?
Combined German inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	73	110	22	25	19	66	31	24	12

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH & SS-T, 1.1.44 (LSSAH 31.12.43), T78, R719; AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand: 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 20.1.44 & 1.2.44, T313, R408; 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; 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. *Due to a lack of reporting of DR figures for 1.1.44 will almost certainly be closer to those of 10.1.44.

operation was 4,666. In this phase of the war, the Red Army's point of concentration lay unambiguously in the sector of Army Group South, against which all six tank armies were temporarily deployed. Also important was the deployment of some 50,000 partisans, who caused great damage in the hinterland and tied down large numbers of German troops. The ensuing offensive to liberate the Western Ukraine was designated the 'Dnieper-Carpathian Strategic Offensive Operation'.¹⁴⁷

Once the breakthrough was affected by the 1st and 3rd Tank Armies on the Kiev axis, they were sent to exploit the German rear. In response, the LSSAH and the 1st Panzer Division were sent south in an attempt to provide a blocking force in front of Zhitomir. Nevertheless, the Germans were soon under the threat of encirclement and Zhitomir was abandoned on 30.12.43 (further north Korosten was also abandoned on the same date). The 4th Panzer Army was being mauled, with Berdichev and Belaya Tserkov being captured by 5.1.44.¹⁴⁸

During the first week of January, the Soviet offensive continued to push the LSSAH ever further to the south-west away from the Zhitomir area in the direction of Shepetovka and Starokonstantinov.¹⁴⁹ The overall LSSAH losses for 21.12.43–15.1.44 in the TF reports highlight that the retreat cost the LSSAH dearly in terms of AFV – a clear sign of the desperate nature of the fighting against the greatly superior enemy numbers.¹⁵⁰

Between 21–30.12.43, the LSSAH TF reports declared the following TF AFV: 7 Pz IV, 14 Pz V, 1 Pz VI.¹⁵¹ While between 1–10.1.44, the LSSAH reported the following TF: 30 Pz IV, 13 Pz VI, 14 StuG and 3 Pak SF.¹⁵² On 15.1.43, the LSSAH reported the further loss of 3 Pz IV and 1 StuG.¹⁵³ We have the chassis numbers for all the TF in these reports. Therefore, during the main thrust of the Soviet offensive, the LSSAH reported a total of 40 Pz IV, 27 Pz V, 14 Pz VI, 15 StuG and 3 SF Pak written off as total losses. Added to this, the LSSAH 10-day status reports indicate that 1 Pz IV and 27 Pz V were sent for homeland maintenance in Germany during this time.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, overall losses between 21.12.43 and 15.1.44 were 41 Pz IV, 54 Pz V, 14 VI, 15 StuG and 3 SF Pak for a total of 127 AFV lost, all of which were of modern specification with high-velocity long-range guns. By comparison during the LSSAH involvement in Operation Citadel (5–16.7.43 plus the 17.7.43 the LSSAH final day at the front), the division lost only 1

¹⁴⁷This paragraph is used with permission of OUP. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear. 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), 381. See also 347 and 349.

¹⁴⁸Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 86 & 91; Frieser, *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*, 370–71, 347.

¹⁴⁹Frieser, *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*, 347; Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 109–10.

¹⁵⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 30.12.43, Losses cover 21–30.12.43, (written 30.12.43) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 10.1.44, Losses cover 1.1.44–10.1.44, (written 13.1.44) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 15.1.44, Losses extend to 15.1.44, (written 18.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁵¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 30.12.43, Losses cover 21–30.12.43, (written 30.12.43) T313, R408.

¹⁵²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 10.1.44, Losses cover 1.1.44–10.1.44, (written 13.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁵³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 15.1.44, Losses extend to 15.1.44, (written 18.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁵⁴PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1.1.44 & 10.1.44, T313, R408.

Pz I, 1 Pz III, 9 Pz IV, 1 Pz VI, 3 StuG and 3 SF Pak for a total of 18 losses (16 of which were of modern specification).¹⁵⁵

Most of LSSAH AFV losses occurred between the start of the Soviet offensive and the conclusion of its main thrust, i.e. between 24.12.43 and 10.1.44.¹⁵⁶ Within these 18 days, the LSSAH suffered around 123 AFV losses 3.b or 3.a (all of modern type).¹⁵⁷ While as we have seen in the relatively comparable timeframe of Operation Citadel 5-16/17.7.43 (12–13 days), the LSSAH in fact lost no more than 18 AFV losses 3.b or 3.a. (two of which were of outdated type: one Pz I and one Pz III).¹⁵⁸ It is remarkable to note that in 10 days between 1–10.1.44 the LSSAH lost 13 Tigers TF.¹⁵⁹ Such losses would have seemed unthinkable to Tiger crews in the summer of 1943. For example, the LSSAH lost just four fewer Tiger tanks in 10 days in January 1944 (west of the Dnieper) than the Germans lost in the whole of July 1943 on the entire Eastern Front! This was a period that included Operation Citadel and the most intense fighting in the defence of the Orel salient.¹⁶⁰

Due to losses (and an overworked AFV repair service), DR had been renamed and reduced to a brigade-sized *Kampfgruppe* between 10–20.12.43.¹⁶¹ With this change, all of the former division's AFV which were undergoing or in need of long-term repair were removed from *Kampfgruppe* DR's inventory.¹⁶² As with the LSSAH, *Kampfgruppe* DR lost many AFV during the Soviet offensive, these losses were all recorded between 1–10.1.44 in a 10-day status report. The losses were 1 Bef Pz III, 18 Pz IV (13–3.a), 16 Pz V (12–3.a), 9 Pz VI (2–3.a) and 4 StuG.¹⁶³ However, it seems DR was committed from the start of the offensive on 24.12.44; so there must have been an administrative delay in reporting these losses due to the fact that *Kampfgruppe* DR was in the heat of battle.¹⁶⁴ There were no 10-day status, inventory or Meldung reports issued by DR for the period 20.12.43–1.1.44. Perhaps then the losses were spread between 24.12.43 and 10.1.44. Regardless, the high losses, relative to the *Kampfgruppe* size, can be attributed to the fact that that DR was fully committed in the face of the vast Soviet armoured attack. It was also during this period that DR lost (bar a few exceptions) the majority of its remaining ex 'Prokhorovka' tanks (see Table 28). It was reported that by 10 January 1944 DR had lost all of its nine surviving Tiger tanks (eight of which had been at

¹⁵⁵II 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.

¹⁵⁶Frieser, *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*, 347.

¹⁵⁷PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 30.12.43, Losses cover 21–30.12.43, (written 30.12.43) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 10.1.44, Losses cover 1.1.44–10.1.44, (written 13.1.44) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 15.1.44, Losses extend to 15.1.44, (written 18.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁵⁸II 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.

¹⁵⁹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 10.1.44, Losses cover 1.1.44–10.1.44, (written 13.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁶⁰The 17 losses on the Eastern Front in July 1943 were distributed as follows: s.Pz.Abt.502: 1, s.Pz.Abt.503: 6, s.Pz.Abt.505: 5, Pz.Rgt.GD: 0, LSSAH: 1, DR: 1, SS-T: 3. See: Zetterling, Niklas & Frankson, Anders, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 121–22; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, GD, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.8.43, T313, R390; Wolfgang Schneider, *Tigers in Combat I* (Winnipeg: J.J. Fedorowicz 2000), 86, 156–57; Schneider, *Tigers in Combat II*, 206.

¹⁶¹PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391.

¹⁶²PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391.

¹⁶³PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408. See Appendix.

¹⁶⁴Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 85; Schneider, *Tigers in Combat II*, 146.

Table 27. LSSAH & Das Reich Strength 10 January 1944.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Inventory										
LSSAH Operational AFV	4	1	25	30	10	7	28/7	13	8	6
Kampfgruppe Das Reich Inventory										
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	8	4	0	1	8	0	4	0
DR Operational	0	0	3 (2 & 1)	0	0	1	8	0	4	0

PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 20.1.44 & 1.2.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH witten 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen witten 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (witten 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; 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.

Table 28. 10 January 1944 – Surviving AFV from the Battle of Prokhorovka.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	T-34	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak SF	Wespe	Hummel
In LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	1	max of 5	0	0	7	0-17	0-13	8	6
DR AFV known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	3 (2 & 1)	0	0	1	8	0	4	0
Totenkopf AFV known to be in LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	Max of 4	Max of 26	0	Max of 4	0	0	0	0	0
Combined total of surviving German AFV on 10.1.44 which were in LSSAH & DR inventories for the battle of Prokhorovka	4	1-5	3-34 (this will be ca 10-12)	0	0-4	8	8-25	0-13	12	6
Combined German inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	4	73	110	22	25	19	66	31	24	12

AOK 8, 1a Kriegstagebuch, übersicht über den Zustand der Divisionen und gep. Einheiten der 8. Armee. Stand: 30.8.43, T312, R55; Gen.Insp.d.Pz.Truppen, Stabsoffizier für AOK 8, 5.10.43, T78, R619, F000836; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1–2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, 20.1.44 & 1.2.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Betr.: Totalausfälle an Pz.Kpfgw. und gep. Kfz. 1–10.7.43, (LSSAH witten 12.7.43, DR & SS-T Lageskizzen witten 23.7.43) T313, R390; II SS Panzer Korps, Ingenieur, Betr.: Kinsatz Raum Belgorod. 5–18.7.43, updated to 22.7.43 (witten 28.7.43), T354, R607, F000629-31; 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.

Table 29. Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 February 1944.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Operational & repair expected within 3 weeks (31.1.44)	?	1	34	49	6	0	32 (at least 3 were StuH)	10	?	?
LSSAH Operational AFV (31.1.44)	?	0	15	22	2	0	29	4	?	?
Kampfgruppe Das Reich Inventory	0	0	6	4	0	1	8	0	4	0
Known to be in DR or LSSAH inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	2 (1 & 1)	0	0	1	8	0	4	0
DR Operational	0	0	3	2	0	0	7	0	?	?
Totenkopf Operational & repair expected within 3 weeks		11	13	0	7	?	16	9	?	?
Totenkopf Operational	3	6	6	0	4	?	7	4	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, DR & SS-T, 1.2.44 (LSSAH 31.1.44), T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung, 1.2.44, T313, R408; 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; 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.

Table 30. Former 'Citadel' SS Divisions AFV Strength 1 March 1944.

	Pz II	Pz III	Pz IV	Pz V	Pz VI	Bef	StuG/ StuH	Pak Sf	Wespe	Hummel
LSSAH Operational & repair expected within 3 weeks	?	4	30	58	1-5	0	18	9 ?	?	?
LSSAH Operational AFV	?	1	0	12	1	0	3	0 ?	?	?
Kampfgruppe Das Reich Inventory (29.2.44)	0	0	17	14	5	1	8	0 4	1	1
In DR inventory the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka (11.7.43)	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	0 4	1	1
DR Operational (29.2.44)	0	0	11	9	5	0	6	0 1	?	?
Totenkopf Operational & repair expected within 3 weeks		8	15	0	9	?	13	10 ?	?	?
Totenkopf Operational		5	8	0	4	?	7	3 ?	?	?

Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH & SS-T, 1.3.44, T78, R719; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, DR and SS-T, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 1-2.7.43 & 10.7.43, T313, R390; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 29.2.44, T313, R408; PzAOK 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; 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, DR & SS-T Ia 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.

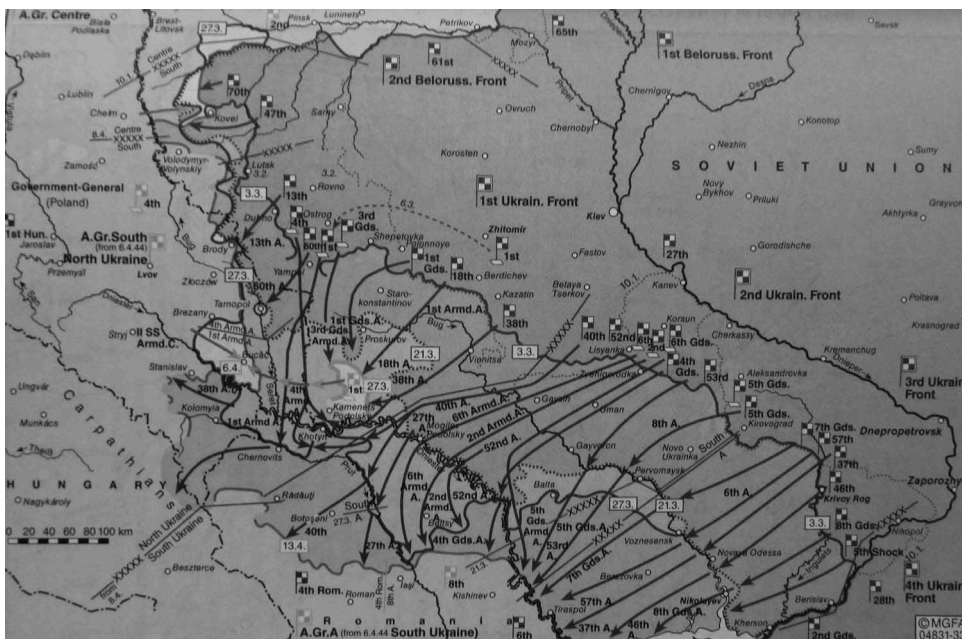


Figure 15. Battles during Army Group South/North Ukraine's withdrawal to the Carpathians (4 March to 12 April 1944), Source: Map IV.III.6., Frieser, Karl-Heinz *Germany and the Second World War Volume VIII – The Eastern Front 1943–1944* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 2017). Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

Prokhorovka) either 3.a or TF.¹⁶⁵ It is also worth noting that even this total is greater than the entire Tiger tank losses sustained by Army Group South during Operation Citadel (6).¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁵PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408. This report lists 250 075 twice (TF & 3.a) unless this was meant to read 250 147 in one instance then all 9 of these Tigers were of Prokhorovka vintage. 250 068 had just returned to DR to make up the 9.

¹⁶⁶Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 122.

To the south, 8th Army was also facing another major Soviet offensive that was launched on 5.1.44. On 8.1.44, Kirovograd was taken but a determined counter-attack led by Grossdeutschland and SS-T brought the Soviet offensive to an abrupt halt on 16.1.44.¹⁶⁷

Following its humbling experience in early January, the LSSAH transferred to the control of 1st Panzer Army (which had just arrived on 4th Panzer Army's right flank) and deployed north of Vinnitsa at Khmelnik. From there it participated from 24.1.44 in a powerful counter-attack on Lipovets at the base of the salient created by the Soviet armoured spearhead towards Vinnitsa. By 28.1.44, the attack had cut off and mauled seven Soviet divisions. Regardless, despite the many minor German tactical successes since the beginning of the Soviet offensive on 24.12.43, the Red Army had pushed the Germans back over 100 km in places. Even while the LSSAH was engaged in its counter-attack, the Red Army had again broken through the German frontline further to the east and encircled XI and XXXXII Korps close to Korsun. On 1.2.44, the LSSAH transferred east to aid the relief column.¹⁶⁸

The LSSAH played only a supporting role in the relief attempt of the roughly 58,000 German troops trapped in the Korsun pocket. The LSSAH protected the relief attack's right flank. Following the desperate breakout on the night of 16–17.2.44 36,262 men managed to escape the pocket, while a further 4,161 had already been flown out before the pocket collapsed. The two trapped German korps, however, lost all their heavy equipment during the breakout.¹⁶⁹

Following the conclusion of the Korsun operation, in early March, the majority of the LSSAH was transported to Belgium in order to be reconstituted in time to face the expected Allied invasion of North-West Europe. Only a regimental sized *Kampfgruppe* remained on the Eastern Front with the small remaining number of operational LSSAH AFV. *Kampfgruppe* LSSAH was also ordered back to the West in mid-April 1944.¹⁷⁰ As a consequence only a small element of the LSSAH was still at the front to face the mighty Soviet offensive launched by 1st Ukrainian Front on 4.3.44. The offensive pushed the Germans back into Eastern Poland.¹⁷¹ The meagre forces of *Kampfgruppe* DR had remained with 4th Panzer Army throughout February and into March, when it was thrown back by the 1st Ukrainian Front offensive. After this, in early March, the majority of the *Kampfgruppe* DR, bar a regimental-sized grouping, was transported to the West to rejoin the rest of the reconstituting division, which like the LSSAH was preparing to face an invasion of north-west Europe by the Western Allies. Mirroring the LSSAH, DR regimental grouping also returned to the West in mid-April 1944.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁷Frieser, *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*, 387–88.

¹⁶⁸Frieser, *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*, 385–87, 390, 347; and Schneider, *Tigers in Combat II*, 110.

¹⁶⁹Schneider, Wolfgang, *Tigers in Combat II*, 110; 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*, 395–96, 409.

¹⁷⁰Schneider, *Tigers in Combat II*, 111–12; Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 153; Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, LSSAH, 1.3.44, T78, R719.

¹⁷¹Frieser, *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*, 349, 417.

¹⁷²Jentz, *Panzer Truppen II*, 153; Schneider, *Tigers in Combat II*, 147–48.

Totenkopf's next major involvement was opposing the massive Soviet offensive launched by the 2nd Ukrainian Front on 3.3.44. The offensive would push the Germans out of southern Ukraine and into Romanian territory.¹⁷³ Once again it is clear from Table 30 that Totenkopf's contingent of ex-LSSAH AFV had virtually all been written off by this date.¹⁷⁴ Unlike the LSSAH and DR, SS-T fought on the Eastern Front for the duration of the conflict with the USSR. By mid-April 1944, it too had also lost all its AFVs and required its panzer regiment to be rebuilt.¹⁷⁵

The Soviet losses for the five Soviet fronts that took part between 24.12.43 and 6.5.44 in the 'Dnieper-Carpathian Strategic Offensive Operation' were extremely heavy at 1,192,900 men, of whom 288,600 dead or missing while as mentioned 4,666 tanks and assault guns were also lost. For the Germans (The 1st & 4th Panzer Armies, 6th & 8th Armies) their losses from January to April totalled 'only' 250,956 men (of whom 41,907 dead and 51,161 missing). However, as a result of the build-up in the West and the general shortage of new recruits for the Wehrmacht, the Germans were now seldom allocating replacement personnel to the Eastern Front; therefore, the impact of their respective losses was far greater for the Germans than it was for the Soviets, despite the latter suffering losses which were five times greater. By early May, the Eastern Front had finally entered a period of stability. This would remain the case until the entire Eastern Front was steamrolled by the gigantic Soviet summer offensives of 1944.¹⁷⁶

Conclusion

Between 1 October 1943 and 31 January 1944, the German Army's tank maintenance companies on all fronts (i.e. including those AFV in Italy) repaired 8,702 tanks while another 453 were repaired in the rear areas. However, given the consistently appalling level of AFV operational readiness that we have witnessed (which afforded non-operational panzers a peculiar form of protection) in the post-Citadel period, this number must have been a drop in the ocean for those AFV that actually needed repair. During the same period, 2,945 were permanently lost this means 25% of all tanks put out of action were lost. As Niklas Zetterling and Anders Frankson have pointed out, this was twice the percentage lost by 4th Panzer Army between 5–10.7.43 during Operation Citadel.¹⁷⁷

As Zetterling and Frankson correctly stated, as the Germans were on the offensive throughout Operation Citadel, they were able to maintain control of the battlefield and therefore able to recover the majority of their disabled AFV. During the autumn/winter of 1943 and beginning of 1944, the Germans were firmly on the defensive. Consequently, the opportunity to recover disabled AFV was far less regular. As a result, otherwise serviceable AFV often had to be blown up by their crews to prevent capture, simply because they had a mechanical failure, a lack of fuel or had become mired. There were

¹⁷³Frieser, *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*, 349.

¹⁷⁴Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 1.3.44, T78, R719.

¹⁷⁵Gen Insp. d Pz Truppen, Waffen SS monthly divisional Meldung and OB charts, SS-T, 15.4.44, T78, R719.

¹⁷⁶Frieser, 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*, 441–42.

¹⁷⁷Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 135.

also other factors which contributed to the large-scale losses seen by German AFV towards the end of 1943 and early 1944. On the west side of the Dnieper, unfavourable terrain with large wooded areas and poor visibility in the winter months led inevitably to close proximity fighting which in turn negated the advantage of the Germans' long-range high-velocity guns. There was also a noticeable drop in quality of trained panzer troops and conversely a rise in quality in the Red Army own armoured training and tactics. The repair services had a lack of spare parts and recovery vehicles, while they were also faced with a collapsing transportation system due to the Soviet advance. This affected the Germans' ability to evacuate damaged AFV and contributed to the disastrous situation the German armoured forces found themselves in. These factors contributed to the large number of panzer losses that devastated the 1st, 2nd and 3rd SS panzer regiments following the commencement of the massive Soviet offensives to liberate central Ukraine, Kiev and western Ukraine.¹⁷⁸

Niklas Zetterling and Anders Frankson's outstanding work on the subject highlights perfectly the main reasons for the low level of operational German AFV and the spike in German AFV total losses on the Eastern Front in the autumn and winter of 1943/44. Zetterling and Frankson observed:

Since the (German .ed.) forces employed in Citadel had enjoyed a long lull before the offensive began, they had had ample time to ensure that their vehicles were in good mechanical condition. Also they had received deliveries of brand new tanks. The German forces in the autumn and winter of 1943/44 on the other hand had to operate with already worn equipment and had less time to carry out repairs and overhauls. Therefore it seems likely that the Citadel forces were less prone to being plagued by mechanical breakdowns. Consequently, it would be expected that the percentage of repairable vehicles would be smaller during Citadel.¹⁷⁹

Perhaps the most of prominent example of the contrasting impact of offensive and defensive operations on AFV longevity can be seen by comparing the LSSAH role in Citadel with its defence against the Soviet offensive of late 1943. During the 18 days of the Soviet offensive between 24.12.43 and 10.1.44, the LSSAH suffered around 123 AFV losses 3.b or 3.a (all of modern type) to a variety of causes relating to enemy action and the impending loss of the battlefield (lack of fuel, lack of rapid recovery units, etc.).¹⁸⁰ While in the relatively comparable timeframe of the Citadel offensive between 5-16/17.7.43 (12-13 days), the LSSAH in fact lost no more than 18 AFV losses 3.b or 3.a.¹⁸¹

As far as former 'Prokhorovka' AFV are concerned, the same Soviet offensive largely brought about their extinction. Having transferred the vast majority of their panzers to DR and SS-T in late July 1943, the LSSAH remaining 6 Pz (1 Pz III & 5 Pz IV) would have succumbed in the winter of 1943/44. The same can be said for the LSSAH ex

¹⁷⁸Forczyk, *The Dnepr 1943: Hitler's Eastern Rampart Crumbles*, 19-20, 22-23, 78, 83-85; 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*, 162.

¹⁷⁹Zetterling and Frankson, *Kursk 1943: A Statistical Analysis*, 135.

¹⁸⁰PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 30.12.43, Losses cover 21-30.12.43, (written 30.12.43) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 10.1.44, Losses cover 1.1.44-10.1.44, (written 13.1.44) T313, R408; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, LSSAH, Betr.: Totalausfälle gep. Kfz. 15.1.44, Losses extend to 15.1.44, (written 18.1.44) T313, R408.

¹⁸¹II 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.

Prokhorovka StuG and Sf Pak, 17 and 16 of which, respectively, made it back to the Eastern Front in November 1943.¹⁸²

Das Reich after participating in the battle of Prokhorovka then received a large number of ex-LSSAH Panzers. As a result by 1.11.43, DR still had 139 ex Prokhorovka AFV in its inventory (28 Pz III, 39 Pz IV, 17 Pz VI, 6 Bef Pz, 23 StuG, 8 Pak Sf, 12 Wespe and 6 Hummel).¹⁸³ By 1.12.43, this number had dropped to 118 (17 Pz III, 31 Pz IV, 15 Pz VI, 6 Bef Pz, 23 StuG, 8 Pak Sf, 12 Wespe and 6 Hummel).¹⁸⁴ When DR transitioned into *Kampfgruppe* Das Reich between 10–20.12.43, the unit shed many of its long-term damaged AFV. It was (like the LSSAH) then decimated by 24.12.43–10.1.44 Soviet Offensive.¹⁸⁵ By 10.1.44, DR only had 16 former ‘Prokhorovka’ AFV in its inventory (3 Pz IV, 1 Bef Pz, 8 StuG and 4 Wespe).¹⁸⁶

Totenkopf’s 30 ex-LSSAH Prokhorovka Pz IV would have suffered severely from the catastrophic loss of 50 Pz IV prior to 1.10.43 (40 or more in September alone). It is likely that by 1.11.43 there were only around 10 ex Prokhorovka Pz IV still in service with SS-T. While some of the four former ex-LSSAH Prokhorovka era Tiger tanks (i.e. not including those received by the LSSAH on 25.7.43 after the battle) may well have survived into 1944; however, their number clearly was not high.¹⁸⁷

Overall, of the 386 AFV (not including 3 Pz I) that were in the inventories of the LSSAH and DR on 11.7.43 (the day prior to the battle of Prokhorovka), by 1.11.43 between 204 and 238 former ‘Prokhorovka’ AFV (likely to be around 218) were still in service on the Eastern Front with the LSSAH, DR or Totenkopf.¹⁸⁸ By 1.12.43, this number had fallen to between 173 and 220 (likely to be around 192); however, this still meant that half of the original Prokhorovka AFV were still with the SS divisions on the Eastern Front 4.5 months after the battle.¹⁸⁹ Some of these figures may sound fairly impressive in terms of longevity; however, taken in isolation they present a wholly distorted picture of events. When one looks at the extremely low number of operational AFV for the SS divisions from August 1943 onwards (which were in no way untypical for AFV on the Eastern Front), it is easy to see one of the chief reasons why the German Army as a whole was on its knees.¹⁹⁰ Only new or reconstituted divisions (such as the LSSAH in November) had any number of operational AFV worth mentioning. Even their number, however, soon dropped to that of their sister divisions. Following the conclusion of the main effort of the Soviet offensive on 10.1.44, the number of former ‘Prokhorovka’ AFV shrank to between 42 and 111 (likely to be around 70 – of which just 13 were Pz IV or Pz VI).¹⁹¹ The overall armoured losses incurred at the turn of 1943/1944 would have seemed incomprehensible to the SS panzer troops in the summer of 1943.

¹⁸²See Tables 18, 22, 26 and 28.

¹⁸³See Table 18.

¹⁸⁴See Table 22.

¹⁸⁵PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 20.12.43, T313, R391; PzAOK 4, O.Qu.V, Kampfgruppe DR, Gep. Kfz. Bestandsmeldung. 10.1.44, T313, R408.

¹⁸⁶See Table 28.

¹⁸⁷See Tables 8, 12, 15, 17 and 18.

¹⁸⁸See Tables 6 and 18.

¹⁸⁹See Table 22.

¹⁹⁰See Tables 12, 15, 17, 21, 25, 29 and 30.

¹⁹¹See Table 28.

Clearly then, the statistical information presented in this article allows us to track and state without doubt when the majority of German AFVs present at the battle of Prokhorovka were eventually written off on the Eastern Front. This article does not change the now widely accepted narrative of the battle of Prokhorovka, but it does provide further evidence which corroborates that narrative.

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Appendix Surviving Prokhorovka – Longevity of Armoured Fighting Vehicles present with LSSAH & Das Reich on 1 July 1943

<u>xx xxx</u>		Confirmed transfer to DR 28.7.43	<u>xx xxx</u>	Due to embedded location in DR inventory almost certainly transferred to DR on 28.7.43	xx-xxx	Confirmed TF loss during Citadel
Key to Appendix :		TF	Totalausfälle -Total Loss & removed from Inventory	3.a Inst. Heimat (Homeland Maintenance) - Sent to Germany for factory repair & removed from inventory	2.c Inst. Heimat (Homeland Maintenance) - Sent to Germany for factory repair & kept in inventory	

LSSAH Pz 1b + Bef 15 014 (remained with LSSAH)		
15 523	Fate 14 587	Fate TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel

LSSAH Pz II 20mm cannon (Only 4 used by the 1st SS Panzer Regiment which then remained with LSSAH)		
28 315 Ausf F	Fate	Fate
28 322 Ausf F	28 307 Ausf F	28 320 Ausf F
28 202 Ausf F	28 243 Ausf F	28 199 Ausf F
	28 360 Ausf F	28 274 Ausf F



LSSAH Pz III 50mm L42 or L60 main gun - including Pz III Bef Sd.kfz. 266 (1 Pz III kz & all Pz III Bef remained with LSSAH)					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
73 733 Ausf K Bef (kz)	With LSSAH in Italy	70 163 Ausf H Bef Dummy gun	73 639 Ausf J (kz)	74 576 Ausf L (lg)	Transferred to II SS Pz Korps or Totenkopf on 28.7.43
68 978 Ausf J (kz)	With LSSAH in Italy	73 697 Ausf K Bef (kz)	73 726 Ausf K Bef (kz)	73 746 Ausf K Bef (kz)	With LSSAH in Italy
73 707 Ausf K Bef (kz)	With LSSAH in Italy	76 476 Ausf M (lg)	75 054 Ausf L (lg)	75 050 Ausf L (lg)	Transferred to II SS Pz Korps or Totenkopf on 28.7.43
<u>75 411 Ausf L (lg)</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	75 414 Ausf L (lg)	75 556 Ausf L (lg)	<u>77-604 Ausf M (lg)</u>	Listed as TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel in a report written on 12.7.43. Yet is transferred to DR 28.7.43! 10.7.43 ten day status report lists a kz Pz III as TF which is withdrawn from LSSAH ist total. Later listed by DR as 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.12.43
<u>75 064 Ausf L (lg)</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>75 394 Ausf L (lg)</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	72 613 Ausf J (kz)	

LSSAH Pz III 50mm L42 main gun Bef Sd.kfz. 267 & 268 (remained with LSSAH)					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
73 731 Ausf K Bef (kz) Sd.kfz. 267	With LSSAH in Italy	73 689 Ausf K Bef (kz) Sd.kfz. 267	With LSSAH in Italy	73 738 Ausf K Bef (kz) Sd.kfz. 268	With LSSAH in Italy

LSSAH Pz IV 75mm L43 or L48 main gun (1 Bef Pz IV & 4 Pz IV remained with LSSAH)				
	Fate		Fate	Fate
<u>83 259 Ausf G L43</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	83 261 Ausf G L43	83 257 Ausf G L43	83 255 Ausf G L43
83 298 Ausf G L43		83 304 Ausf G L43	83 302 Ausf G L43	<u>83 262 Ausf G L43</u>
<u>83 256 Ausf G L43</u>	TF 1-10.11.43	83 274 Ausf G L43	83 291 Ausf G L43	<u>83 296 Ausf G L43</u>
				In DR inventory on 1.12.43 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44 (almost certainly 3.a for a period before 20.10.43 as well)
83 260 Ausf G L43		83 990 Ausf G L43	<u>83 288 Ausf G 43</u>	83 175 Ausf G L43
83 238 Ausf G L43		83 279 Ausf G L43	<u>83 282 Ausf G L43</u>	<u>83 285 Ausf G L43</u>
83 293 Ausf G L43	TF 10.7.43 Citadel	83 471 Ausf G L43	83 299 Ausf G L43	83 474 Ausf G L43
83 183 Ausf G L43		83 473 Ausf G L43	<u>82 717 Ausf G L43</u>	83 306 Ausf G L43
83 460 Ausf G L43		<u>83 185 Ausf G L43</u>	<u>83 472 Ausf G L43</u>	83 276 Ausf G L43
		3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10 Jan 44		In DR inventory on 1.12.43
83 481 Ausf G L43	TF 10.7.43 Citadel	<u>82 712 Ausf G L43</u>	82 721 Ausf G L43	82 716 Ausf G L43
		TF (behind enemy lines) 11-20.1.44. Recovered 23.1.44 & returned to inventory. Handed over by DR to 19 Pz Div 29.2.44		
83 792 Ausf G L43		83 305 Ausf G L43	83 311 Ausf G L43	82 714 Ausf G L43
<u>82 600 Ausf F2 L43</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	83 264 Ausf G L43	84 062 Ausf G L48	84 093 Ausf G L48
<u>83 841 Ausf G L48</u>	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 10-20.11.43	83 830 Ausf G L48	84 088 Ausf G L48	<u>84 076 Ausf G L48</u>
			TF 10.7.43 Citadel	TF 10-20.11.43
84 096 Ausf G L48		84 079 Ausf G L48	<u>84 208 Ausf G L48</u>	<u>84 197 Ausf G L48</u>
<u>83 824 Ausf G L48</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>84 903 Ausf H L48</u>	84 210 Ausf G L48	84 219 Ausf G L48
84 087 Ausf G L48		83 856 Ausf G L48	83 870 Ausf G L48	83 854 Ausf G L48
83 863 Ausf G L48		84 241 Ausf G L48	84 280 Ausf G L48	84 229 Ausf G L48
			In DR inventory on 1.12.43	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44

(Continued)



(Continued).

LSSAH Pz IV 75mm L43 or L48 main gun (1 Bef Pz IV & 4 Pz IV remained with LSSAH)						
84 228 Ausf G L48	84 244 Ausf G L48	<u>84 913 Ausf H L48</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>83 942 Ausf G L48</u>	Received by 4.7.43. Embedded with other ex LSSAH in DR reports. In DR inventory on 1.12.43	
<u>83 858 Ausf G L48</u>	Received by 4.7.43. Embedded with other ex LSSAH in DR reports. In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>85 625 Ausf H L48</u>	Received by 4.7.43. Embedded with other ex LSSAH in DR reports. In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>85 001 Ausf H L48</u>	Received by 4.7.43. Embedded with other ex LSSAH in DR reports. 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44	
8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	
8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	
8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43	8x xxx	Received by 4.7.43			
LSSAH Pz VI (Tiger) 88mm L56 main gun						
	Fate	Fate	Fate	Fate	Fate	
250 066	<u>250 067</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43	<u>250 068</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 1-10.1.44. TF in same period	<u>250 071</u>	TF 1-10.1.44
250 072	250 073		<u>250 075</u>	TF 1-10.1.44 (also listed as 3.a & sent to Reich for repair - duplicated in error for unidentified Tiger?)	250 048	
250 223		<u>250 214</u>	TF 1-10.1.44	<u>250 210</u>	<u>250 226</u>	TF 1-10.1.44
<u>250 194</u>	TF 10-20.11.43	<u>250 197</u>	Received 25.7.1943. TF 10-20.11.43	250 xxx	250 xxx	Received 25.7.1943 -Joined Totenkopf 28.7.43
250 xxx	Received 25.7.1943 -Joined Totenkopf 28.7.43	250 xxx	Received 25.7.1943 -Joined Totenkopf 28.7.43			

LSSAH StuG 75mm L43 or L48 main gun (remained with LSSAH)				
	Fate		Fate	Fate
91 152 Ausf F L43		91 743 Ausf F/8 L48		91 733 Ausf F/8 L48
91 107 Ausf F L43		91 732 Ausf F/8 L48		91 749 Ausf F/8 L48
91 097 Ausf F L43	TF 1-10.1.44	91 677 Ausf F/8 L48		91 693 Ausf F/8 L48
91 704 Ausf F/8 L48		91 147 Ausf F L43		91 127 Ausf F L43
91 141 Ausf F L43		91 135 Ausf F L43		91 722 Ausf F/8 L48
91 730 Ausf F/8 L48		91 716 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 1-10.1.44	91 157 Ausf F L43
92 141 Ausf G L48		92 161 Ausf G L48		92 127 Ausf G L48
92 153 Ausf G L48		92 152 Ausf G L48		92 126 Ausf G L48
92 315 Ausf G L48		92 239 Ausf G L48		

LSSAH Pz Jg 38t 75mm L46 main gun (remained with LSSAH)				
	Fate		Fate	Fate
1 820		1 824	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	1 856
1 824	TF 1-10.1.44	1 825		1 829
1 830		1 831		1 834
1 835		1 837		1 848
1 850	TF 22.11-2.12.43	1 854	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	1 858
x xxx	Received after 10.7.43	x xxx	Received after 10.7.43	x xxx
x xxx	Received after 10.7.43	x xxx	Received after 10.7.43	x xxx

LSSAH Pz Jg II 76.2mm gun (remained with LSSAH)	
x xxx	Fate

LSSAH s.F.H. 18 Sfl. (Hummel)150mm heavy field howitzer (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
320 033	320 035	320 037	320 041
320 042	320 044		

LSSAH I.F.H. 18 Sfl. (Wespe) 105mm light field howitzer (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
31 075	31 068	31 070	31 072
31 074	31 078	31 067	31 069
31 071	31 073	31 076	31 077

LSSAH Pz III Art. Beob. Wg. Armoured observation post (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
61 065	61 336	61 554	61 616
65 118	65 233	65 373	65 734
65 805			

LSSAH s.l.G. 33 Sfl. 38r (Grille) 150mm heavy infantry gun (remained with LSSAH)				
	Fate		Fate	Fate
2 141		2 148	2 150	TF 21-30.12.43
2 143		2 149	2 151	
2 154	TF 21-30.12.43	2 155	2 156	2 152
				2 153
				2 157

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 221 - 28mm sPzB41 - light armoured car (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
810 492	810 845	810 346	810 831

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 222 - 20mm cannon - light armoured car (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
810 947	810 957	810 1308	810 1303

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 223 (FU) - MG34 - light armoured car - radio version (remained with LSSAH)			
	Fate	Fate	Fate
810 1385		810 1396	810 1389

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 231 - 20mm cannon - heavy armoured car (remained with LSSAH)		
60 046		Fate

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 232 (FU) - 20mm cannon - heavy armoured car - radio version - (remained with LSSAH)			
59 953	Fate	79 496	Fate
		79 497	79 498

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 261 - light armoured radio car - long-range radio - (remained with LSSAH)				
	Fate	Fate	Fate	Fate
810 1391	810 0257	810 0060	810 1364	
810 1374	811 0249	810 1373	810 1403	
810 1411	811 0259	810 1381	811 0260	

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 263 (FU) - MG13 - heavy armoured car - radio version- (remained with LSSAH)	Fate
79 607	

LSSAH Sd. -kfz. 247 - heavy wheeled armoured personnel carrier (remained with LSSAH)	Fate
140 011	402 824

DR Pz 1b Bef	Fate
15 036	In inventory 1.12.43

DR Pz II 20mm cannon	Fate
23 076	TF 20-31.10.43

DR Pz III Bef 50mm L42 main gun Sd.kfz. 267	Fate
68 790 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43

DR T-34 76.2mm main gun	Fate	Fate	Fate
1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12
13	14	15 (14)	16
17	18	19 (32)	20
21	22	23	24
		TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	
		TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	

DR Pz III Bef 50mm L42 main gun					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
70 159 Ausf H Bef Dummy gun	Does not appear in inventory	73 751 Ausf K Bef (kz)	TF 1-10.1.44	73 760 Ausf K Bef (kz)	In inventory on 29.2.44
73 722 Ausf K Bef (kz)	In inventory on 1.12.43	73 714 Ausf K Bef (kz)	In inventory on 1.12.43	73 695 Ausf K Bef (kz)	Does not appear in inventory
				73 679 Ausf K Bef (kz)	Does not appear in inventory
				73 744 Ausf K Bef (kz)	In inventory on 1.12.43



DR Pz III 50mm L60 main gun						
	Fate		Fate		Fate	
72 241 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43	73 458 Ausf J	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	72 266 Ausf J	TF 20-31.10.43	73 104 Ausf J Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
74 601 Ausf L	In inventory on 1.12.43	74 140 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	74 355 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	73 455 Ausf J Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
72 245 Ausf J	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	72 267 Ausf J (902)	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	72 213 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43	73 102 Ausf J (514) TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel
74 353 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	73 466 Ausf J	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.12.43	74 149 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	73 770 Ausf J Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
72 284 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43	72 724 Ausf J	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	76 444 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 035 Ausf L Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
76 490 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	76 494 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 029 Ausf L	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 10-20.11.43	75 391 Ausf L In inventory on 1.12.43
75 027 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 040 Ausf L	TF 1-10.11.43	77 560 Ausf M	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.12.43	75 045 Ausf L TF 10-20.11.43
76 503 Ausf M	In inventory on 1.12.43	76 516 Ausf M	TF 1-10.11.43	75 383 Ausf L	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.11.43	76 515 Ausf M Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
75 020 Ausf L	TF 10-20.11.43	75 030 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 354 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	76 495 Ausf M Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
76 510 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	76 486 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 483 Ausf L	In inventory on 1.12.43	74 579 Ausf L Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
75 356 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 366 Ausf L	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 10-20.11.43	75 388 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 380 Ausf L 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.11.43
75 084 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 071 Ausf L	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.11.43	75 089 Ausf L	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.11.43	77 579 Ausf M TF 10-20.11.43
74 597 Ausf L	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	77 593 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	77 601 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	77 564 Ausf M Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
77 600 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	75 094 Ausf L	In inventory on 1.12.43	77 583 Ausf M	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	61 417 Ausf F Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
65 009 Ausf G	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	65 119 Ausf G	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	68 529 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43	68 676 Ausf J In inventory on 1.12.43
68 870 Ausf J	In inventory on 1.12.43	65 090 Ausf J	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory			

DR Pz IV 75mm L43 or L48 main gun							
	Fate		Fate		Fate		Fate
82 843 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 1.12.43	82 752 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 1.12.43	82 755 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 1.12.43	82 760 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
82 741 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	83 013 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in inventory	83 247 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	83 263 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
83 463 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 1.12.43	83 241 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 31.10.43. Returned from 3.a 1-10.1.44. TF 11-20.1.44	83 243 Ausf G L43	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	83 456 Ausf G L43	In inventory on 1.12.43
83 813 Ausf G L48	TF 10-20.11.43	83 848 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in inventory	83 852 Ausf G L48	TF 20-31.10.43	84 077 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43
84 091 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	84 092 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in inventory	84 094 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	84 100 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
84 223 Ausf G L48 (823)	Listed as TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel in a report dated 23.7.43. 10.7.43 ten day status report lists only 1 Pz IV as TF (i.e. 84 231). In DR inventory from 31.10.43. Listed as 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44	84 225 Ausf G L48	TF 1-10.1.44	84 231 Ausf G L48 (823)	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	84 236 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 31.10.43
84 242 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 1-10.1.44. Handed over to 19 Pz Div 29.2.44	84 905 Ausf H L48	Does not appear in inventory	84 224 Ausf G L48	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44	83 849 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43
83 875 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory. Returned from 3.a 1-10.11.43. In inventory on 1.12.43	84 226 Ausf G L48	TF 1-10.1.44	84 904 Ausf H L48	TF 20-31.10.43	83 866 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
84 072 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory						

DR Pz VI (Tiger) 88mm L56 main gun					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
250 077	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 11-20.12.43	250 092	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44	250 088	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)
250 076	In inventory on 1.12.43	250 086	TF 1-10.1.44	250 085-624	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel
					Long-term non-operational from 10-20.3.43 to at least 4 July - does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)
250 225	In inventory on 1.12.43	250 220	TF 10-20.11.43	250 201	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)
250 217	TF 11-20.12.43	250 219	2.c Inst. Heimat & sent to Reich for repair (remains in inventory) 20-30.11.43		Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)

DR StuG 75mm L48 main gun							
	Fate		Fate		Fate		Fate
91 705 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 20-31.10.43	91 710 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	91 712 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	91 713 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 1-10.1.44
91 714 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	91 717 Ausf F/8 L48	Does not appear in inventory	91 719 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 1-10.1.44	91 721 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 1-10.1.44
91 723 Ausf F/8 L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	91 724 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	91 667 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	91 671 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43
91 673 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	91 674 Ausf F/8 L48	TF 1-10.1.44	91 681 Ausf F/8 L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	91 687 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 1.12.43
91 698 Ausf F/8 L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	91 668 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	91 679 Ausf F/8 L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	91 684 Ausf F/8 L48	In inventory on 29.2.44 – listed in error as 91 864. Correctly listed in inventory on 1.12.43
95 177 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	95 125 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	92 297 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	92 263 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
92 266 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	92 311 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	92 287 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	92 306 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43
95 172 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	76 203 Ausf G L48	Listed TF 10-20.11.43 yet in inventory on 1.12.43	95 170 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 29.2.44	95 178 Ausf G L48	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
95 126 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43	95 176 Ausf G L48	In inventory on 1.12.43				

DR Pz Jg 38t 76.2mm main gun					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
1 556	Does not appear in 1.12.43 inventory	1 560	In inventory on 1.12.43	1 562	Does not appear in 1.12.43 inventory
1 564	In inventory on 1.12.43	1 565	In inventory on 1.12.43	1 567	In inventory on 1.12.43
1 708	In inventory on 1.12.43				
				1 563	In inventory on 1.12.43
				1 568	In inventory on 1.12.43

DR Pz Jg PzII 75mm L46 main gun			
	Fate		Fate
28 998	In inventory on 1.12.43	29 999	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
		30 000	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory

DR s.F.H. 18 Sfl. (Hummel)150mm heavy field howitzer					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
320 083	In inventory on 1.12.43	320 076	In inventory on 1.12.43	320 046	In inventory on 1.12.43
320 087	In inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a inventory on 29.2.44	320 084	In inventory on 1.12.43	320 051	In inventory on 1.12.43



DR Sd. -kfz. 221 - 28mm sPzB41 - light armoured car					
	Fate	810 496	Fate	810 573	Fate
810 493	In inventory on 1.12.43	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 10-20.1.44	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	810 584	In inventory on 1.12.43

DR Sd. -kfz. 222 - 20mm cannon - light armoured car					
	Fate	810 011	Fate	810 946	Fate
810 137	In inventory on 1.12.43	In inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 10-20.1.44. 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	In inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 10-20.1.44. 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	810 754	In inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 10-20.1.44. 3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44
810 909	Returned from 3.a 10-20.1.44. In inventory on 29.2.44	810 689	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	810 578	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory
811 1135	In inventory on 1.12.43	811 1159	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	811 1097	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory

DR Sd. -kfz. 223 (FU) - MG34- light armoured car (radio version)					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
811 0065	In inventory on 1.2.44	811 0066	In inventory on 1.12.43	811 0063	810 781
810 979	TF 1-10.2.44	810 712	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory	8xx xxx	8xx xxx
8xx xxx					

DR Sd. -kfz. 231 - 20mm cannon - heavy armoured car					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
59 975	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	60 608	In inventory on 1.12.43	60 679	79 540
				3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	TF 1-10.12.43

DR Sd. -kfz. 232 (FU) - 20mm cannon - heavy armoured car (radio version)					
	Fate		Fate		Fate
60 665	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44	60 667	TF 21-30.11.43	60 687	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.2.44

DR Sd. -kfz. 260 - light armoured radio car (medium-range radio)				
Fate		Fate		Fate
811 0088	In inventory on 1.12.43	811 0239	In inventory on 1.12.43	In inventory on 1.12.43
			811 0248	
DR Sd. -kfz. 261 - light armoured radio car (long-range radio)				
Fate		Fate		Fate
811 0362	In inventory on 1.12.43	811 0348	In inventory on 1.12.43	In inventory on 1.12.43
811 0073	In inventory on 1.12.43	811 0107	811 0034	811 0037
		TF 26.12.43	In inventory on 1.12.43	In inventory on 1.12.43
DR Sd. -kfz. 263 (FU) - MG13 - heavy armoured car (radio version)				
Fate		Fate		Fate
79 435	In inventory on 1.12.43	87 160	87 163	In inventory on 29.2.44
			3.a & sent to Reich for repair 20.1-1.2.44	
DR Sd. -kfz. 247 - heavy wheeled armoured personnel carrier				
Fate		Fate		Fate
140 048	Returned from 3.a 10-20.1.44. In inventory on 29.2.44	140 025		In inventory on 1.12.43

December 1942 - July 1943 issued LSSAH Tigers Pz VI (Tiger) 88mm L56 main gun				
	Fate		Fate	Fate
250 053	TF 1-10.3.43 Kharkov counter- offensive	250 066	<u>250 067</u>	In DR inventory on 1.12.43
<u>250 071</u>	TF 1-10.1.44	250 072	250 073	In DR inventory on 1.12.43. Returned from 3.a 1- 10.1.44. TF in same period
250 048		250 223	<u>250 214</u>	TF 1-10.1.44 (also listed as 3.a & sent to Reich for repair - duplicated in error for unidentified Tiger?)
<u>250 226</u>	TF 1-10.1.44	<u>250 194</u>	<u>250 197</u>	TF 1-10.1.44
250 xxx	Received 25.7.1943 -Joined Totenkopf 28.7.43	250 xxx	250 xxx	Received 25.7.1943 -Joined Totenkopf 28.7.43



December 1942 - July 1943 issued Das Reich Tigers Pz VI (Tiger) 88mm L56 main gun					
	Fate	250 092	Fate	250 078	Fate
250 077	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 11-20.12.43	250 092	3.a & sent to Reich for repair 1-10.1.44	250 078	TF 20.2-2.3.43 Kharkov counter-offensive
250 084	In inventory on 1.12.43	250 076	In inventory on 1.12.43	250 086	TF 1-10.1.44
250-085 (524)	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel	250 049	Long-term non-operational from 10-20.3.43 to at least 4 July - does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)	250 225	In inventory on 1.12.43
250 201	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)	250 213	Does not appear in 31.10.43 inventory (lost after Citadel but prior to 20.10.43)	250 217	TF 11-20.12.43
				250 219	2.c Inst. Heimat & sent to Reich for repair (remains in inventory) 20-30.11.43

January - July 1943 issued Totenkopf Tigers Pz VI (Tiger) 88mm L56 main gun				
	Fate	Fate	Fate	Fate
250 079			250 080	250 089
250 095	TF 5-10.7.43 Citadel		250 096	250 101
250 103			250 152	250 211
250 216			250 224	250 230
				250 094
				250 102
				250 212