



## ***Czechoslovakian 1st Army Corps Spearhead list, 1945***

Compiled by L. D. Ueda-Sarson

Version 1.50 (25 August 2013)

### ***General notes:***

This list covers the Soviet-backed Czechoslovakian 1st Corps plus attached assets in 1945 until the end of the Prague Offensive, which lasted until the early hours of May 12, several days after fighting had ceased elsewhere. The Corps had been greatly expanded from the Czechoslovakian 1st Brigade that had fought in the Ukraine in 1944; as it approached its homeland in 1945 its numbers swelled to 30000 effectives, and, by the start of May, 50000. In 1945, the Corps was initially stationed in what is now Poland before partaking in the liberation of Slovakia and eventually the Prague offensive in May. This was in stark contrast to the British-backed Czechoslovakian Independent Armoured Brigade, which was stuck besieging Dunkirk, and had to force-march across Germany after VE-day to arrive in Czechoslovakia a week after the 1st Corps. Although most Soviet formations were well-supplied with artillery, the Czechoslovakian 1st Corps was even better off, with double the allocation most equivalent Soviet formations received: each Brigade had two complete regiments of artillery: over 20% of the Corps' personnel were artillerymen (or women).

### ***List notes:***

Items entirely in *italics* (typically FAO or engineering assets) do not add to or deduct from a battalion's morale.

Items in **grey** are not available when using Keith McNelly's Spearhead/Modern Spearhead scenario-generation system (available from <http://ww2spearhead.wordpress.com/scenario-generation-system/>). For the purposes of the scenario-generation system, the 1st Corps (like other Soviet Corps) counts as a Division, and not a true Corps.

When a unit is described as having e.g. "2-T-34/85 or T-34/76", the unit may be entirely with T-34/85, entirely T-34/76, or use a mixture of both.

All mortar batteries listed as being 2 stands strong can instead be fielded as single stands, as they represent only 6 tubes.

See the separate Czechoslovakia (1945) data card for in-game statistics for vehicles and other stands.

Where I have been unable to find sufficient data to describe a formation, this is noted as "*(data deficient)*" under the formation's title.

In all cases, the rules for Soviet troops and formations apply.

# Czechoslovakia 1st Corps 1945 *Morale: Regular (but see notes)*

## Core Corps Assets:

### Corps Headquarters:

*(data deficient, but possibly)*

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

Recon: 1-SMG Cavalry stand

Artillery Command HQ: 1-CBO (off-table)

1-Recon Company, with: (see notes)

3-SMG Cavalry stands

## 3-Infantry Brigades (1st, 3rd, 4th), each with: (see notes)

### Brigade Headquarters:

*(data deficient, but possibly)*

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

Recon: 1-SMG Motorcycle Stand

Engineering: 1-Engineer Stand in Truck

### AA Battery:

1-vz.39 S 37 mm 61-K/Truck

4-AA HMG Stand in Truck

### 3-Infantry Battalions, each with:

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

AT: 1-vz.37 PTP 45 mm/Truck or Horse-drawn

3-Rifle Companies, each with 2-Rifle Stands (see notes)

MG Company: 3-MG Stands

SMG Company: 3-SMG Stands (not in the 3rd Brigade)

Mortar Battery: 2-vz.41 82 mm M/Horse-drawn cart or Truck

1-SMG Battalion, with: (3rd Brigade only)

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

AT: 1-vz.37 PTP 45 mm/Truck or Horse-drawn

MG Company: 3-MG Stands

3-SMG Companies, each with 2-SMG Stands

Mortar Battery: 2-vz.41 82 mm M/Horse-drawn cart or Truck

1-Artillery Regiment, with: (see notes)

2-Sections, each with 3-vz. 42 R ZiS-3/Truck

1-Artillery Regiment, with: (see notes)

1-Section with 3-vz.38 S 122 mm M-30/Truck

1-Section with 3-vz.38 120 mm M/Truck

1-Section with 3-vz.38 120 mm M/Horse-drawn cart

1-Engineering Battalion (2nd), with: (3rd Brigade only)

*(data deficient, see notes)*

## 1-Airborne Brigade (2nd), with:

### Brigade Headquarters:

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

Cycle (Recon) Company:

3-SMG Motorcycle Stands or Rifle Stands with bicycles

Engineering Company:

2-Engineer Stands in Truck

### AA Battery:

1-vz.39 S 37 mm 61-K/Truck

4-AA HMG Stand in Truck

### AT Battery:

4-vz.37 PTP 45 mm/Truck or Horse-drawn

2-Parachute Battalions (10th, 11th), each with:

HQ: 1-HQ Stand in Truck

3-Rifle Companies, each with 2-Rifle Stands and 2-SMG Stands

Mortar Battery: 2-vz.41 82 mm M/Horse-drawn cart or Truck

1-Tank Battalion, with: (see notes)

HQ: 1-BA64B

Recon: 1-SMG Motorcycle Stand

1-Armoured Company, with: 2-T34/76 or T-34/85

2-Tank Companies, each with: 2-T-70

1-Artillery Regiment, with: (see notes)

2-Sections, each with 3-vz. 42 R ZiS-3/Truck

1-Artillery Regiment, with: (see notes)

1-Section with 3-vz.38 S 122 mm M-30/Truck

1-Section with 3-vz.38 120 mm M/Truck

1-Section with 3-vz.38 120 mm M/Horse-drawn cart

## 1-Tank Brigade (1st) with:

### Brigade Headquarters:

HQ: 1-BA-64B or T-34/85

Recon: 1-BA-64B or T-70

Engineering: 1-Engineer Stand in Truck

2-T-34-T ARV

AA Battery: (see notes)

1-vz.39 S 37 mm 61-K/Truck

4-AA HMG Stand in Truck

2-Tank Battalions, each with:

1-HQ T-34/85 (see notes)

3-Tank Companies, each with 2-T-34/85

1-Tank Battalion, with:

1-HQ T-34/85 or T-34/76 (see notes)

2-Tank Companies, each with 2-T-34/85 or T-34/76

1-Tank Company with 2-T-34/85 or T-34/76 or SU-85

1-Tank Battalion, with: (only from March; see notes)

1-HQ T-34/85 (see notes)

2-Tank Companies, each with 2-T-34/85

## Corps Assets:

### 1-Artillery Regiment (5th), with: (see notes)

2-Howitzer Sections, each with:

1-FAO

3-vz.37 S 152 mm ML-20/JA-12 Tractor

1-Self-propelled Artillery Section, with:

3-SU-76M or ISU-152 (see notes)

### 1-Engineering Battalion (1st), with: (see notes)

Battalion Headquarters Company:

HQ: 1-HQ Engineer Stand in Truck

Recon: 1-Engineer Stand in Truck

7-NLP Pontoon bridge/Truck

1-MNL Rubber assault rafts/Truck

1-BMK Motor boat

2-Engineer Companies, each with:

3-Engineer Stands in Truck

## Attached Assets:

### 1-Czechoslovakian Mixed Air Division (1st), with:

2-Fighter Regiments (1st, 2nd), each with:

3-Squadrons, each with 3-La-5FN or La-7 (see notes)

1-Air-Ground Attack Regiment (3rd), with:

2-Squadrons, each with 3-II-2

1-Squadron with 3-II-2 or Pe-2FT (see notes)

## Notes:

"Trucks" are Jeeps for HQ stands, Dodge WC-51/52 ¾ ton for towing ZiS-3, and Studebaker US6 for towing M-30.

Corps recon assets are unknown, but Czechoslovakia had at least some cavalry immediately post-war, and as it is hard to imagine these being newly raised in Czechoslovakia, they were presumably already in existence as part of the 1st Corps.

I have not been able to find out to what extent the Infantry brigades were mechanized – for simplicity the list presented here assumes the infantry had no access to transports at all, but this is an unlikely assumption at this date. On the other hand, the Corps was definitely not *entirely* motorized, as certain mortar and engineering units at least are known to have relied on horse-drawn carts. Trucks accordingly *may* be provided as transports for those elements not provided with other forms of transport.

The 5th Artillery Regiment's self-propelled Section must be attached to a fighting battalion; it is too small to operate independently under Spearhead. It is unclear if it was equipped with SU-76 or SU-152; different sources imply different things without stating clearly (one or the other must be chosen, not a mixture). The 5th Artillery Regiment's Howitzer Sections count as Spearhead Divisional-level artillery, with each Section counting as a SH Battalion; each may be allocated to a specific fighting battalion, or kept in divisional support. The Artillery Sections of other Artillery Regiments count as SH Companies, and can only be allocated to fighting battalions (since SH, unlike Modern Spearhead, does not have any rules for Brigade-level general artillery support). One of the two Sections of each ZiS-3-equipped Regiment normally kept one battery in reserve for use as spares, so can be fielded "full-strength" as only two stands-strong. Sources differ about the exact make-up of the Corps' artillery regiments. One has the 5th Regiment being a ZiS-3 Regiment, and it, along with the four other ZiS-3 regiments having 3 sections, not two; and the four other Regiments each having 5 batteries: 1 of 122 mm howitzers, 1 of 152 mm howitzers, 2 of SP guns, and 1 of mortars, and with the batteries being smaller than sections: each of just 6 guns (or 4 for the 152 mm battery). This alternative arrangement is not provided for in this list (not least because it would be very difficult to simulate under SH).

The 1st Tank Brigade gained a 4th Tank battalion at the start of March, but it had only 2 companies (T-34/85); this battalion should probably be rated as Green morale. The Brigade had 8 ISU-2 heavy tanks, but these only arrived after the final cease-fire, being rushed forward to take part in the Prague victory parade, and thus are not included. It is unknown what AA assets the Brigade had (if any); the company given here assumes it had the same assets as the 2nd Infantry Brigade, but it is entirely possible it had less. The Brigade may be broken down and its battalions subordinated to other Brigades; each battalion may then take advantage of the special Soviet command ability and operate unattached (in which case it may choose to operate without a designated HQ stand), or it may be attached to another battalion as a support battalion (see page 3, section 2.3.3).

The 2nd Airborne Brigade was entirely earth-bound during this period: most of its trained paratroopers had been detached in 1944 to aid the Slovakia uprising; the Soviets may not have been keen on its members jumping ahead into Czech lands and encouraging an independent administration to be set up;

and in any case, air transports were lacking. Most of its 1945 personnel were new Slovakian recruits; accordingly one of its battalions may be rated as Green morale. SMG stands may be withdrawn from their parent Battalions and instead attached to the Tank Battalion as tank-borne infantry companies (see page 10, section 5.7.3 and page 18, section 7.10 of the rules); any infantry may also ride the tanks without being attached, if under appropriate orders with command radii. The structure of the 2nd Brigade's tank battalion at this time is unknown. In 1944, the Brigade had its armour organized as a recon unit; this structure is presented in the main list. But it is at least as likely in 1945 the battalion was organized like a standard T-34/85 battalion as in the 1st Tank Brigade. The 2nd Brigade also initially had a separate 45 mm anti-tank battery, but fewer other artillery pieces than other Infantry Brigades, and various other structural differences. Although the artillery seems to have been reorganized in line with the other Brigades, when this happened is unclear, so the 1944 organization is also a possibility; in which case replace the 2 listed regiments with:

Artillery Section: 3-vz. 42 R ZiS-3/Truck

Mortar Battery: 2-vz.38 120 mm M/Truck.

Note that the 2nd Brigade had as many SMGs as rifles, and no separate SMG companies, hence the mixing of SMG and rifle stands.

The 3rd Infantry Brigade included an Engineering Battalion (the 2nd), possibly organized as per the Corp's 1st Engineering Battalion. The 3rd Infantry Brigade's SMG companies were consolidated into a complete SMG Battalion, so its Rifle Battalions lack SMG Companies. This list assumes that appropriate battalion-level support assets were supplied.

Infantry Battalions have been modelled with each battalion's AT-rifle company distributed among the other Rifle companies. The machine gun companies the normal infantry battalions are here modelled separately, but these may also be dispersed amongst the Rifle companies (except in the 3rd Brigade's SMG Battalion), in which case, each battalion's MG company is deleted, and the Rifle companies are expanded to 3 platoons stand each (note that the 2nd Brigade is modelled without MG companies). The 2nd Brigade had 24 AA HMGs in addition to 4 37 mm AA guns in 1944 as part of its AA battery; it is assumed the other infantry brigades in 1945 were similar, but given the lack of German airpower at the time, they may well have made do with less.

At the end of March, the first Infantry Battalion in each Infantry Brigade (the 1st, 4th, and 7th Battalions for the 1st, 3rd and 4th Brigades, respectively), was converted into a "Shock" Battalion, possibly armed with captured German StG 44 assault rifles. If so, the three Shock battalions, 1 per Infantry Brigade, substitute Infantry Stands for Rifle and SMG Stands. The StG 44 continued in use in the Czechoslovakian army after the war; the native vz.58 assault rifle was only introduced in 1958 (the pre-war Czechoslovakian army had used the ZH-29 semi-automatic rifle). The 1st Battalion had been equipped with the Soviet SVT-40 semi-automatic rifle as far back as 1943, although this weapon wasn't good enough to qualify its bearers as having an AI factor of 5. Another possibility is that these Shock battalions may have been equipped with half-track APCs. A single non-shock battalion from each Brigade may be graded as Green morale to simulate the influx of new recruits joining as the Corps approached Slovakia.

The 1st Engineering Battalion was frequently short of vehicles, and horse-drawn carts were used for many transport tasks. It also had a training company, not listed separately here.

Female personnel were particularly numerous in the Engineering units, as well as AA units.

A maximum of one Pe-2 may be used until mid-April, from which time two stands may be used. La-7 flights were only used in May (the Prague Offensive); at which point there were equal numbers of La-5FNs and La-7s. Note that the 2nd Fighter Regiment was earmarked for training purposes, and thus would not normally be available for combat duties. Although under disciplinary command of the 1st Corps, operationally the Division was under the command of the Soviet 8th Air Army, and most of the personnel, at least initially, were Russian; the planes carried standard Russian markings.

During this period, the 1st Corps was initially commanded by Brigadier General Ludvik Svoboda, and then, from April 3rd, Brigadier General Karel Klapálek, who had previously commanded the 3rd Brigade.

Operationally, the 1st Corps was part of the Soviet 18th Army, and could expect some support from Soviet units within that formation. At the end of the war, the 18th Army included the 8th, 24th and 138th Rifle Divisions, 159th Fortification Division, 146th Gun Artillery Brigade, 281st Mortar Regiment, 269th Guards AAA Regiment, 294th Guards Anti-Tank Regiment, 477th Mountain-Packed Mortar Regiment, 108th Guards SP Artillery Regiment, 9th Engineering Brigade, and the 897th Engineering-Sapper Brigade. Additionally, at the start of the year, the 237th and 351st Rifle Divisions, 2nd Guards Airborne Division, 130th and 1672nd Anti-Tank Regiments, 195th and 253rd Mountain-Packed Mortar Regiments, 1485th AAA Regiment, 5th Guards Tank Brigade, 875th and 1666th SP Artillery Regiments, 95th and 104th Independent Artillery Battalions, 179th and 180th Independent Back-packed Flame-

thrower Companies, and the 4th Mountain Sapper-Engineering Brigade were also included.

Finding out what these Soviet units were equipped with is proving very challenging! But as the 1st Corps operated quite tightly integrated into the 18th Army, it is really necessary: Czechoslovakian infantry could (and did) find themselves sheltering behind Soviet IS-series heavy vehicles at times.



Svoboda addressing men of the 1st Battalion in 1943