

Battle of Stalingrad

The battle of Stalingrad, between the Red Army and the 6th Army took place in autumn 1942, and was indeed one of the most horrendous battles, and **that influenced** the outcome of WW2. Furthermore, taking place in the South West of Russia, Hitler's planned campaign in Russia was only supposed to last a couple of weeks; instead it dragged on for months.



- Overview of Soviet Union -

The battle of Stalingrad – named after the Soviet Union commander, Joseph Stalin – was **one of the most gruesome battles in the history of the world**, which took place for only two reasons...

Hitler wanted to humiliate Joseph Stalin by attacking the city named after him (Stalingrad). It would also make **strategic sense** to attack the Caucasus, where **he could supply oil for his army's** during the attack. The **assault** was a total surprise on the Russians, as Joseph Stalin had just made a peace treaty with the Germans. Although it wasn't going to be an easy attack...

Winter

By November, 90% of Stalingrad had fallen **into the German's hand**. Although Russia was losing the **conflict**, they had one **upcoming** advantage... Winter.

This was an advantage of course to the Russians, as they **finally have an ultimate weapon**. Their gun's had a very good sensitive level, which could stand the extreme weather. However, the German's clothes and equipment is not able to hold warmth and includes things such as: leather **colour** boots, shirt, and a simple war beret.

Due to Hitler's earlier decision to bomb the city, it burned everything flammable, which led to no way of producing heat.

In addition, after a couple of weeks, soldiers from the 4th Panzer army, were **in a life or death situation**, they were forced to make fires underneath their machinery/tanks. The streets were rubble, and this complete unexpected eventuality caused the Germans to die out from severe difficulty (frostbite). And to top it all off, the Russians made a pincer move on them which left them starving, freezing and scared.

Street – to – street

“The army’s exact losses are still uncertain, but there was no doubt that the Stalingrad campaign represented the most catastrophic defeat in German history.”

— Antony Beevor, *Stalingrad*

One of the main reasons why this battle was horrendous for both allies was the way they fought.



By mid- November, the average German survival rate was around 24 hours, when the Russian’s was around 2 – 4 days. During the battle around 200,000 Germans were being killed by things such as: the lack of heat, illnesses (frostbite, gangrening) or starving to death.

In the attack, dominance over the couple of houses left was fought for so much, that they would fight from room to room, just to claim it for hiding and sleeping in. It was wanted so badly for safety, the soldiers would have to sleep next to their enemies, and with the winter already started, they were sleeping at temperatures like – 30 degrees! The streets had no cover for anyone, and with snipers killing people by the minute, and German and Russians were practically fighting in rubble; this was one fight to remember. With the Wermacht still surviving off of small rashes, and turning to suicide for a quick option, this truly was one of the worst battles in the history of the world...

Once the German’s defence gave in, 90,000 were captured and only 5,000 survived, but sadly some committed suicide after the war, as they had seen too much in battle.

And when they were defeated by one of the biggest countries in the world, they were no longer the attacking force, but now the defensive force...



By Theabelle