

## Viking Attack! – Eastern Poland, July 1944

Enfield, NC

August 21-23, 2020



### Soviet Unit Impression

Soviet forces will be portraying troops of the 57th Guards Rifle Division, 4th Guards Rifle Corps, 8th Guards Army, 1st Belorussian Front.

### Unit History

The division was formed as the 153rd Rifle Division on 22 June 1941 in response to the German invasion.

For their defense of Belarus and fighting around Smolensk, the 153rd Rifle Division was one of the first divisions to be designated a Guards formation. On September 18, 1941, the division was reformed and redesignated the 3rd Guards Rifle Division.

After taking additional heavy casualties in late 1941 and early 1942, the division was reformed for the second time in February 1942. In December 1942, the division was redesignated the 57th Guards Rifle Division.

In 1943-44, the division took part in offensive after offensive include the Izyum-Barvenkovo Offensive, the Lower Dnieper Offensive, the Dnieper–Carpathian Offensive, Operation Bagration, the Vistula–Oder Offensive, and the Battle of Poznań.

In 1945, Stalin was determined that the Army that had defended Stalingrad would take part in the capture of Berlin. Therefore, in a deliberate symbolic move, the 8th Guards Army was sent northwards to the center of the front, coming under command of 1st Belorussian Front. So, after being bled white in the push west, the division was reformed for the third time in early April of 1945.

### **Mindset, Morale, and Supply**

It is important to note that by July 1944, the 57th Guards would have essentially been in its' fourth formation. After the encirclements of 1941 and 1942, many of the men and women marching into Germany would have been new to the division since. Some would have been more recent replacements following the crossing of the Dnieper.

Being part of the "tip of the spear" of the 1<sup>st</sup> Belorussian Front, the unit would have been well clothed and equipped. Morale would have been high due to fighting the Fascist enemy on his own soil.

### **Impression Guidelines**

#### **General Rules**

1. The goal is simple - to look like typical Red Army soldiers fighting in eastern Poland in July 1944. Please keep that in mind when putting together your impression.
2. Take a "Less is more" approach. The Red Army was travelling pretty light at this point in the war.
3. The Command Staff will be inspecting all attendees. If the Commander suggests you remove or switch something, don't get upset. (See Rule #1)
4. Loaner gear is available so if you need something, contact the Commander. We are happy to help.

### **Uniform**

#### **Headgear**

Preferred – Pilotka made of wool, cotton, or wool/cotton blend. Cap star can be large or small, painted or enameled.

Not allowed - Repro or postwar "Staybright" type stars.

**Gynmastiorka (Tunic)**

Preferred – Obr43 pattern without pockets.

Accepted – Obr35 pattern converted to 1943 regulations or Obr43 pattern with pockets.

**Sharovari (Breeches)**

Preferred - Obr35 or Obr43 pattern.

**Footwear**

Sapogi (high boots) or botinki (low boots) with proper puttees. Soviet and Lend-Lease styles are acceptable.

**Undergarments**

Preferred – Soviet-issue underwear

Acceptable – Lend-Lease underwear or “tank top” without tags or printing.

Not allowed – Modern tshirts and underwear

**Medals and Decorations**

Guards Badge - All attendees will have a proper Guards badge.

Campaign medals are not authorized.

**Equipment****Kaska (Helmet)**

Every soldier will have a helmet. “Everywhere around in the sand I see soldiers...I see only their raised heads, like water melons in a garden.”

Preferred – standard wartime style SSh-40

Accepted – SSh-39.

Not allowed – “Converted” Czech or other postwar Communist.

**Remyen (Belt)**

Preferred – Leather belt. Soviet types or US-made “Garrison” belts would be appropriate.

Accepted – Canvas/leather belt

**Ammunition Pouch** – Please wear one pouch on your right side.

Preferred – “Reparations” or reproduction leather/pigskin pouches for rifles. Three-cell canvas pouches for submachine gun. Leather/pigskin or synthetic pouches for SVT-40.

Discouraged – “Tsarist” type ammunition pouches.

Not allowed – Kirza rifle pouches or postwar Polish submachine gun pouches with nylon belt loops.

**Lopata (Shovel)** – Shovel should have appropriate carrier.

Preferred – Soviet-style riveted or stamped shovels are accepted.

Accepted – German shovels

Not allowed – Chinese or “Spetsnaz” shovels.

**Flyaga (Canteen)** – Canteen should have appropriate carrier.

Preferred – Wartime style with small threads, glass canteens, or postwar (large threads) that have been repainted or stripped to bare aluminum.

Accepted – Prewar canteen (cork stopper) or German canteens in Soviet carriers.

Reluctantly accepted – Unmodified postwar canteens.

**Plasch-Palatka (Rain Cape)**

Preferred – Wartime style with leather or handsewn grommets.

Accepted – “Defarbed” postwar type with handsewn grommets.

Not allowed – Postwar style with brass grommets.

**Myeshok (Knapsack)**

Preferred – Soviet-made wartime style.

Accepted – Reproduction wartime style.

Not allowed – Postwar style with pockets.

**Soomka Protivogaznaya (Gas Mask Bag)** – Optional. Limited numbers.

Preferred – Leningrad pattern or other wartime styles.

Accepted – Correctly converted postwar Soviet.

**Knives** – Knives are optional. Side knives in limited numbers will be allowed.

Preferred – Pocket knife.

Accepted – SVT-40 bayonet or K-98 “trophy” bayonet. NR-40 “Scout” Knife may be worn by scouts, snipers, sappers, and as approved by the Commander.

Not allowed –Trophy daggers, or rubber knives.

**Grenade Pouch** – Optional – very limited numbers. If you are going to carry a grenade pouch, you must have appropriate and correct dummy grenades.

Preferred – Nothing.

Accepted – Three cell pouch for F-1 or RG-42 grenades.

Not allowed – RG-33 pouches, shovel pouches, etc...

**Koteluk (Mess kit)**

Preferred – pot type.

Accepted – Two-piece style. Should be repainted or stripped to bare aluminum.

Reluctantly accepted – Unmodified postwar mess kit.

## **Medical Equipment**

All medical equipment will be approved by the Senior Sanitar prior to being fielded.

## **Small Arms**

The following small arms are acceptable for this scenario:

DP light machine gun

PPSh-41

PPS-43

M1891 or M91-30 rifle

M44 carbine

M38 carbine (specialists only)