

AVSIM Commercial Sim Review

WWII Battle Tanks: T34 vs Tiger



Product Information

Publisher: [Lighthouse Interactive](#) **Product Site:** [T34 vs Tiger](#)

Description: World War II Tank Combat Simulation.

Download Size:
1.7 GB

Format:
DVD

Simulation Type:
Tank Combat Simulation

Reviewed by: [Etienne Martin](#) AVSIM Staff Reviewer - December 23, 2008

Introduction

This is a first look at Lighthouse Interactive's World War II Battle Tanks: T34 vs Tiger. In this title, tank combat is recreated between two of the better tanks from World War II; the venerable Russian T34 and the German Tiger. This article will only be a quick look, and we'll hopefully revisit the title with the full version for a bit more in-depth coverage.

The full title may be quite different from the preview edition, especially with regards to content.



The Sim

The preview copy only gave me access to four missions (two per side). The directory structure did include a total of two campaigns with six missions each, although I was unable to load them. Each of the four missions I played didn't last more than 15 minutes to complete, and the terrain map seemed quite short with the start of the mission very close to the action.



T34 vs Tiger includes a detailed mission editor based on its help file I found in Russian, yet untested as the actual program wasn't included in this preview copy. This is good news as new content can be

created.



The very first impression after getting into my tank was that the driving controls are fairly simplified, especially as the default settings are go forward, back, left and right with various amounts of speed. This greatly simplifies things in battle as you do not really need to understand any of the complexities of driving a tank. Yet, part of the fun includes maneuvers in a vehicle you don't drive every day.



I found my tank (either the T34 or Tiger) didn't react much to terrain type, they were perfectly happy to climb steep hills without the engine complaining too much. It was however, easy to stall when starting to move if my RPM's weren't up or if I was in the wrong gear.



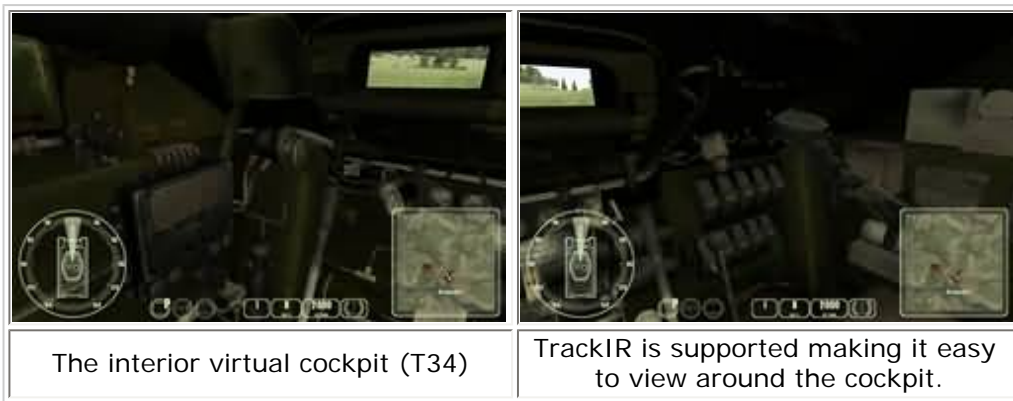
The gunner and commander sights and optics are well represented, and traversing the turret to look for targets is satisfying. The mouse control for the gun was overly sensitive to me, and I found it quite easy to over compensate for large movements with the mouse. Using a joystick helps things, and I only used my mouse for small corrections to elevation and traverse the gun.



T34 Gunner view port

T34 Commander view port

The physics of the shell trajectories seemed a bit too accurate and predictable for me. Historical accounts have pointed to notorious shell inaccuracy in armored combat of the era, primarily due to the variability in manufacturing and chemicals used. In T34 vs Tiger, hitting the target was relatively simple because the trajectory of the shell is very predictable, therefore making the gunner's job easier.

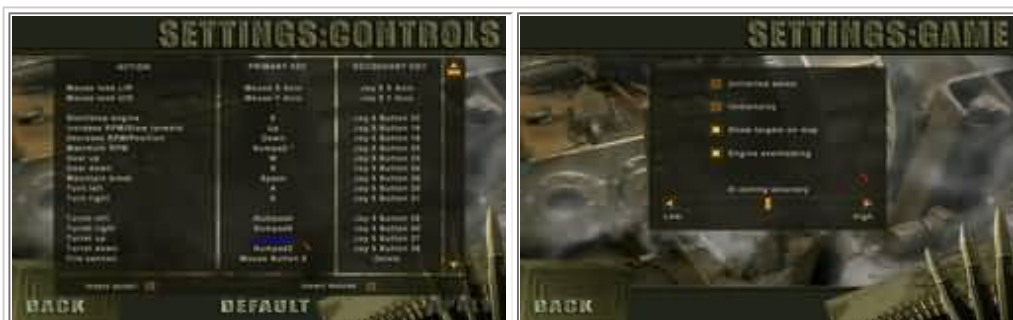


The interior virtual cockpit (T34)

TrackIR is supported making it easy to view around the cockpit.

Several shell types are available and should be used against different target types (e.g., use shrapnel for soft targets).

Just about every object seems destructible, which can be quite pleasing. Bushes and trees easily break in front of the tanks which makes movement, even in tough terrain, fairly easy. It goes without saying, don't use the main road to approach your target, the enemy has it well covered.



Keymapper – good support for various joystick configurations

Sim options

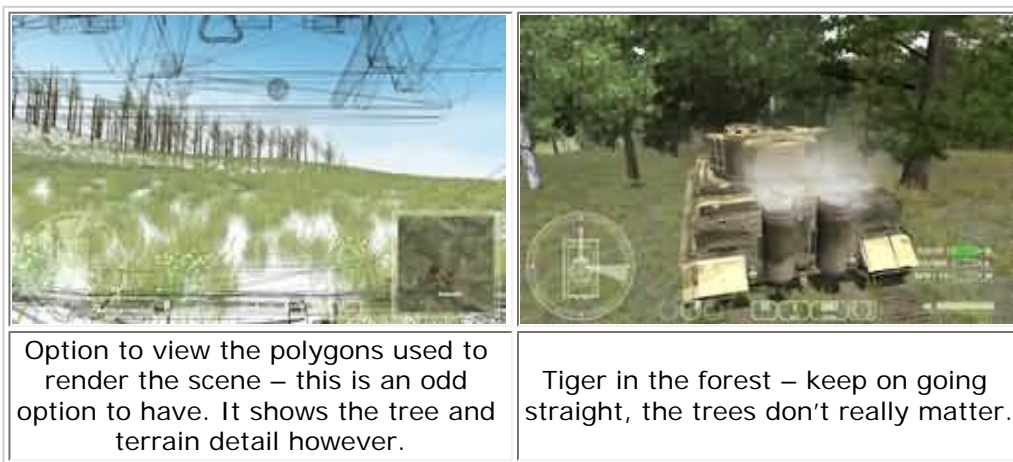


I found the AI quite up to the challenge for a combat simulator, with the enemy using concealment tactics as well as the element of surprise, instead of madly rushing no matter what is happening. In fact, the AI made for very ferocious initial encounters, although as with many titles of this genre, there is no substitute for play against another real player, and multiplayer is definitely possible.

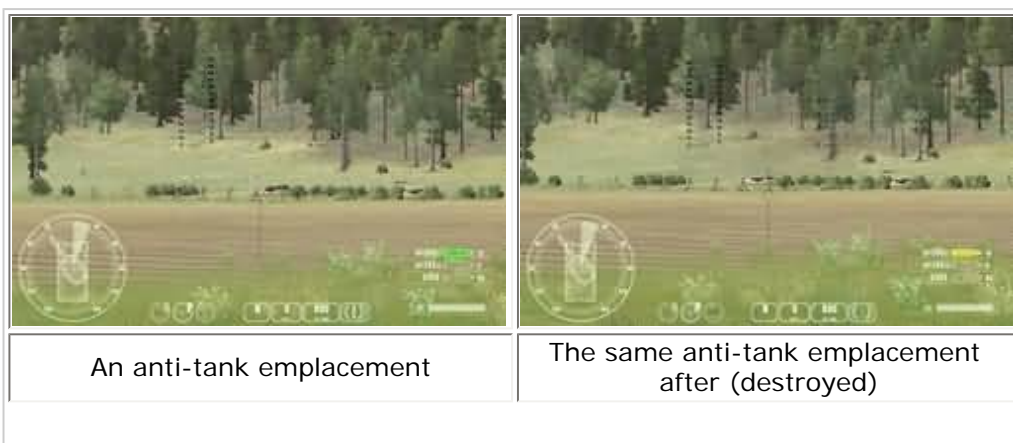
Visuals

The sim has great vehicle detail and decent terrain, except for a couple of points. The ground textures are simple; the terrain itself is composed of flat polygons with almost no variation. In fact, the terrain looks quite angular and coarse in terms of the number of polygons used.

While the trees and bushes are well executed, the ground cover seems a bit sparse, which didn't add to the immersion. Up close however, things look really nice. If anything, I'd say this decision was made to keep the level of detail high reasonably close to the action, sacrificing distant rendering for performance reasons.



Water features are there, although the river wasn't moving that much, or at least it didn't give me the impression of flowing water.





Destroyed T34.

Destroyed Tiger – depending on the damage, the turret may or may not stay attached.

The four missions are all in daytime, and I didn't see any weather or time of day effects.



Rivers can be crossed.

Conclusion

It is difficult to judge the full game from just four missions, and no manual to boot.

In this first look, T34 vs Tiger immediately comes across as emphasizing combat strategy over simulation of the vehicles. Controls suffer a bit from somewhat oversimplification. This is not necessarily a bad thing as it allows the player to focus on the combat aspects of the sim while reducing a learning curve.

In the four missions I tried, the AI was capable and responded well to threats using the terrain for concealment. For example, backing up to stay in hull down positions. Combat was quick, unforgiving and ferocious.

The visuals are good, although I found the damage model a bit disappointing. The vehicles are meticulously detailed and well rendered from any angle.

The quality of terrain objects and textures makes for a good general atmosphere, except that it clashes with the quality of the significantly better textures of the vehicles in the sim. The ground in particular could use a bit more variety and detail, but is really not bad. Yet, in my opinion, is inferior to competing titles.

T34 vs Tiger has potential, yet this preview has left me wanting for a bit more depth for the vehicle and crew simulation. All told, the title thus far feels more like an action game than a simulator.

Test System

Intel QX9650 @ 4GHz
 4 GB of RAM
 NVIDIA 8800 Ultra
 CH Products controllers
 Windows Vista 64

Testing Time:
 4 hours

What I Like About T34 vs Tiger

- External models of player vehicles
- Destructible scenery
- Above average AI
- Sound set
- Track-IR support
- Good joystick support

What I Don't Like About T34 vs Tiger

- Terrain felt a bit angular and ground textures could be better
- Distant objects don't render well (forests)
- Small map, short missions (<15 minutes)

Printing

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[T34 vs Tiger](#)

[\(adobe acrobat required\)](#)

Comments?

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