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ORDER OF APPEARANCE

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Russ "ATO" LOCKWOOD,

STAFF DEVELOPER



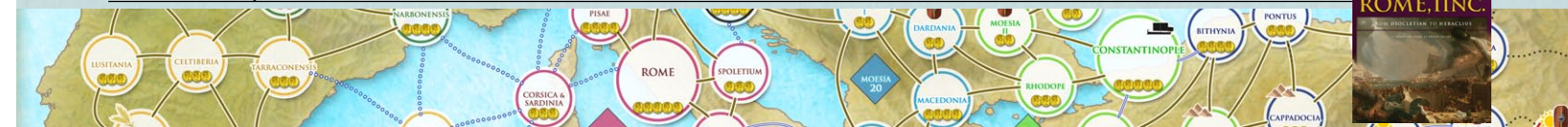
ATO Annual 2022: Stalingrad: Verdun on the Volga Reprint

Work continues on this exciting project and our next release! Our biggest uncertainty is to whether to claim it's a "reprint" or an "upgrade." With no box or mounted map this time around, calling it an Upgrade feels not-quite right. Yet adding in all the new content and a two-sided map makes it feel more like an Upgrade than just a Reprint. Let us know your thoughts. Either way, everything people love about the game is still there. It's a fast-moving, desperate fight for both sides, with the Soviet feeling like he is holding on by his fingernails, and the German knowing that every step forward comes at a cost...even when he "wins" he loses.

But possibly the most exciting element is found on a single counter, which can flip from side to side. The "Advantage Marker" is a marvelous device that can do a wide range of things, from turning a negative combat result into a "neutral" one (which might be tremendously positive, compared to the alternative) to literally making a day or a night "last longer," increasing replacements, or (late in the Campaign Game) even bringing in powerful reinforcements. Players will be challenged to decide exactly *how* they want to use the Advantage when they have it, always knowing that if they use it, then they give it to the other side. But both sides know they're going to lose it at the end of a day or a night anyway, which encourages them to "use it or lose it" somewhere along the way each turn. But how many times it goes back and forth is the teetering act both players face. It's one more factor of making sure that no two games will be alike.

The Passing of David Boe We received sad news that David Boe, our developer for the award-winning *ROME, Inc.*, passed away last October. Our condolences go out to his family. Hailing from Minnesota and a communications professional throughout his life, his contributions to *Against the Odds* with articles and game development shall be missed.

ATO 61: Rome, Inc.



David Boe managed to get a surprising amount of work in on *ROME, Inc.*, and with this project now assigned to me, I'll be starting not from scratch but with a fair amount of momentum. Another plus is that Phillip Jelley's sequel uses the same basic system as the original in converting the system to cover the period of Emperors Diocletian to Heraclius. The better news is that a changing Roman Empire of East and West offers new challenges for solo players and perhaps even more so for two-player games. And yes, you can merge the two systems together for an epic 90-turn extravaganza. Fear not, *Rome, Inc.* comes with five scenarios for shorter games: 286 CE, 363 CE, 425 CE, 497 CE, and 565 CE. The map consists of provinces grouped into the four commands: Gaul, Italy, Illyria, and the Orient. The same nail-biting allocation of resources to fend off enemies domestic and foreign is here in spades, with Attila the Hun looting his way through the empire.

ATO 62: Strike of the Heron



Playtesting continues of the August 1942 drive to Stalingrad. New research by designer Perry Moore has fine-tuned the counter mix, although the basic German smash and exploit versus Soviet counterattacks and severing of supply routes remain in effect. We are fine-tuning the map, which is long and narrow from the Don River to the Volga River, as opposed to the usual more rectangular map. Yes, it's a long way to Stalingrad...while generally steppe country, the hills, towns, and ravines can form key defensive terrain to slow and sometime halt the German offensive as well as pivot points for counterattacks.

The Usual Suspects: Now that you have *Cities of the Damned* in hand, please take a look at "In the Pipeline" on the website and vote for a game that you want to see published in our pages. If you find yourself seeking a new topic, I'd invite you to head over to BGG and scroll through: boardgamegeek.com/wiki/page/Against_the_Odds_Article_Index

As always, if you have any **rules questions** for any *ATO* game, you can post on Consimworld and/or Boardgame Geek or drop me an e-mail at gamesupport@atomagazine.com. If you have **non-game** related questions, like a customer service issue, send an e-mail to admin@atomagazine.com.

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