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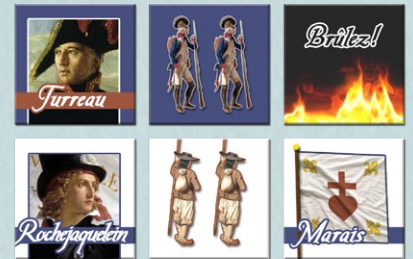
As vaccinations accelerate in 2021, we certainly hope this will be the year that coronavirus becomes a memory. Solo games took off in the wake of convention cancellations and social distancing. Yet, even then, small "pods" of wargamers met to keep face-to-face gaming alive. I expect the second half of 2021 will see a mighty resurgence of gaming group meetings and conventions.

Certainly, *Against the Odds* saw an increase in design submissions, and we're giving each game a thorough examination before vetting a game for voting in "In the Pipeline."

As always, if you have any rules questions, drop me an e-mail at gamesupport@atomagazine.com and I'll see it gets addressed. That goes for all of ATO's games.

2019 Annual: *La Vendée*

We next turn our attention to the 2019 Annual *La Vendée* about the 1793 counter-revolution by Royalist forces in western France against the French Revolutionaries in Paris. The draft rules for this area-move game get the usual initial conversion into ATO format, with all the typical initial back and forth with designer John Poniske. Right now, we're working on the card-driven mechanic for armies and the fixed movement for detachments and partisan bands, to be followed by the combat system, which will take into account hit-and-run raids, set-piece battles, and fortress sieges.



ATO 55: *Lee's Greatest Victory*

Work is almost complete on the area-impulse game covering the 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville during the American Civil War, with graphics work in full vigor. This is Mike Rinella's third area/impulse ACW game for ATO: *Not War But Murder* (Cold Harbor) was in ATO # 19 and *Birth of a Legend* (Peninsula Campaign) was in ATO # 32.

Units are mostly Union divisions and Confederate brigades, with historical leaders present to provide a combat boost, but with the risk of being wounded or killed. Pontoon bridges and entrenchments are part of the basic rules, while optional rules incorporate weather and additional units. Each turn represents one day of time and 1.75 inches on the map represents around a mile. The game lasts six turns.

Historically, both sides divided their forces in the face of a determined enemy, gambling their mens' lives and opportunities in their bids for a victory. Hooker's plan was audacious and nearly succeeded; Lee came away victorious but just barely, and at great cost.



ATO 56: *Hitler's Stalingrad: Breslau 1945*

This clever two-player design by Perry Moore about the Soviet siege of Breslau in 1945 completed development and extensive playtesting. It will shortly make its way through the graphics process, final rules review, and final confirmations. The basic game provides considerable nuances for both sides as players learn to use the strengths of the respective forces. Momentum changes through the game and different Soviet strategies and German ripostes offer replay opportunities. Also included are optional rules such as Luftwaffe supply, Tabun nerve gas, command interference, special city terrain effects, and more.

I can do no better than quote one of the playtesters: "For a mid-sized 'magazine' game, there are a lot of layers here to enjoy and master. And the rules keep things exciting all the way into the end-game...This is a well-thought-out game." PDF downloads of the last couple of playtests have been posted online. See the *Hitler's Stalingrad: Breslau 1945* game discussion at talk.consimworld.com/WebX?14@@.1de22d6a (Messages 13 and 19 contain a text recap plus the links to the PDFs).

