***SOS4*** REBORN OUTLINE 09302022

***Streets of Stalingrad™*** *Death of a City –*this is the fourth edition of ***SOS***, previous editions were published in 1979, 1982, and 2002.

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Card templates: Mark Schumann, *MacGowan & Lombardy’s* ***The Great War™*** card game and numerous other projects with Dana

Card development and all other graphic layout: Dan Zillion, many projects with Dana

What’s in the fourth edition of ***SOS***?

**A SMALLER MAP** that uses the Soviet and German historical cartography just like the previous editions. Some terrain features such as woods and hilltops appear slightly more graphically abstract in appearance than previous editions, but the city block plan and factory buildings and gullies (balkas) are exact reproductions of the 1942 maps.

Some of the gamers at CSW Expo 2022 were surprised that the entire game board is just one 19.25 inches x 28.5 inches map compared to the 8-foot monsters of the past editions (the latest smaller version can be viewed by clicking the image on the pre-launch web page). This was regarded as a positive by almost all of the gamers I spoke with at CSW, most of whom never played the original big SOS – they can now play the game on a regular table space in a much more reasonable amount of time. The full campaign game is 60 days – 20 3-day Turns – playable in several hours. There are shorter scenarios that use only a portion of the game map. (We also hope to create one or more *solitaire* scenarios but that will be done after we finalize the 2- and multi-player rules.)

**RANDOM EVENT & COMMAND DECISION CARDS** are a brand-new feature of ***SOS4*** that reflect the restrictions of supplies, attrition (leader casualties and material losses), the evolving battlefield situation/conditions, and the constraints by higher headquarters imposed on the German 6th Army and Soviet 62nd Army.

**NEW BIGGER UNIT COUNTERS** compared to previous editions.

All SOS4 unit counters – playing pieces – are large 3/4-inch squares (samples are shown on the pre-launch web page), but you can still see the terrain in the large 1.25-inch hexes without removing these large counters from a hex.

German regiments and Soviet regiments and brigades are identified by their historical number and parent unit (division). These are Maneuver Units (MU) that remain on the game board unless they are destroyed, depleted, or intentionally removed from the game by a player.

Subordinate and support units (SU) have a strength value for combat, but not a historical identification such as company or battalion number or their parent unit. Instead, these SU are identified by type such as artillery, combat engineers, leaders and commissars, armor (tanks, panzers, and StuGs), etc., and remain in their appropriate Reserves box until needed to resolve a battle. Using generic SU reduces game board clutter and sorting time.

When a Command Decision card is played by a player for that type of SU such as combat engineers, all of the generic combat engineer SU counters are placed in a cup and one is drawn (chit pull) to determine what SU strength is available for a battle. For example, a commissar counter could be anything from a -3 up to a +3 die roll modifier (DRM) to reflect the wide disparities in commissars’ abilities to motivate their men and (usually) their lack of military training and experience. That’s 7 total commissar counters needed for SOS4 instead of 20 or more commissar counters needed as in previous editions that used historical identifications.

**NEW TURN SEQUENCE** for ***SOS4*** (rules version 2.0 as of 09282022) –

SETUP & PRE-TURN CARD DRAWS

● A scenario is chosen. Each side has their own setup chart that shows the Order-of-Battle (OOB), including the subunit types available. Regiments/brigades (MU) are placed in game map hexes noted for them with their strength point marker “hidden” underneath them. (Each side has their own separate setup chart so their opponent cannot see the enemy's strength markers. We will test an optional random point strength marker “pull” for some or all of the starting units to keep an element of the fog of war among starting forces.)

● Each side has a deck of Command Decision (CD) cards. Each player starts the first Turn with the number of CD cards noted for that scenario. The scenario notes how many CD cards may be selected by a player from the CD deck while the rest of a player’s card hand is drawn randomly from the shuffled CD deck without looking at the cards. (For example, they may select 4 cards and randomly draw 4 more.)

● Before any movement or combat, at the start of a Turn both players draw one Random Event (RE) card from the top of the shuffled RE deck (Soviet side draws first). Any RE effects are immediately applied for that Turn and the two RE cards immediately reshuffled back into the RE deck unless the card indicates it may be used later that Turn.

MOVEMENT PHASES

● Movement phase 1. The Soviet player may move any Regiment/Brigade not adjacent to German Regiments. This may require that the Soviet player uses a CD card from their hand unless the Soviet units are reinforcements not yet on the game map. Soviet reinforcements not yet on the game map may be moved from the East Bank where they start the Turn to any West Bank hexes, including next to German Regiments – no CD card is required to move these reinforcements.

● If the Soviet player has a CD card that permits one or more attacks, they may place Attack markers on hexes with German units this Turn as outlined below in Attack phases 1 through 7. (The Soviets are on the defensive, but there will be opportunities for their MU to attack.)

● Movement phase 2. After any and all Soviet attacks are resolved, the German player may move any Regiments not adjacent to Soviet Regiments/Brigades. A German CD card that allows German Regiments to redeploy is required to move from a hex adjacent to a Soviet Regiment/Brigade to a hex with a different Soviet Regiment/Brigade. German reinforcements not yet on the game map may be moved from the Reserves box where they start the Turn to any West Bank hexes, including next to Soviet Regiments/Brigades – no CD card is required to move these reinforcements.

ATTACK PHASES (BATTLES)

A player is not required to attack in a Turn. They can hold their CD cards to use for attacks in a future Turn unless they choose to use these cards for defense.

● Attack phase 1. A player declares attacks by placing an Attack marker on all the hexes occupied by enemy counters that they intend to attack this Turn. One attack is resolved before the next attack may be conducted. Only one enemy hex may be attacked, but every friendly MU and SU counters adjacent to that enemy hex may participate in the attack.

● Attack phase 2. Before rolling the dice to resolve the attack, the attacking and defending players may choose a number of CD cards in their hand. They must use at least one CD card from their hand unless they have no more CD cards in their hand. The number of CD cards a player may choose may also be limited by the types of their units in the battle.

For example, a Soviet Guards regiment may use more CD cards than a regular Soviet army regiment or

brigade.

If a player chooses to use a leader CD card in their hand, they immediately and randomly draw

a leader counter (chit pull). That leader may have a DRM or column shift benefit for their side’s dice roll

in the battle, and some leader counters allow their side to immediately draw more CD cards – and those

cards may be used for the battle, but only that specific battle. These CD cards are then discarded after

the battle is resolved.

● Attack phase 3. The CD cards each player use note what SU subunits (if any) may be added to the Regiments/Brigades in the battle. One at a time, each SU type’s strength markers are drawn randomly (chit pull) and their DRM or column shifts will be applied to the dice rolls (phase 6).

● Attack phase 4. Both side’s Regiments/Brigades MU are now flipped to their opposite side to reveal their experience level (which die to use) and their strength point marker – only markers with a strength of from 1 to 6 may be used for an attack. Some strength markers have a zero (0) and can only be used for defense.

● Attack phase 5. The defender chooses one appropriate terrain die depending on the terrain in its hex: city 6-sided; or factory 10-sided; or all other terrain 4-sided. Defender and attacker also choose one die based on the experience level of the Regiments/Brigades MU in the attack: green 4-sided; veteran 6-sided; or elite 10-sided. Attacker must use the experience level die of the lowest MU if there is more than one in the attack. The attacker may never roll a terrain die.

● Attack phase 6. Players compare their total Regiment/Brigade MU strength point markers – defender will have only one marker but the attacker could have two or more strength markers. All MU and SU DRM are then added or subtracted from the dice rolls. The dice roll net result number could either be in favor of the attacker (+) or defender (-). This net dice roll is then located on the Combat Results Table (CRT) column after any shifts. Losses (if any) are taken from the strength point markers under the Regiment/Brigade MU. For example, a loss of one point results in a 3 point marker replaced with a 2 point marker, etc.

● Attack phase 7. The CRT result may require a defender MU to retreat with its surviving strength point marker, or that MU may be eliminated from the game and removed from the game map (placed in the Eliminated Units box). One attacking Regiment/Brigade MU may then occupy the defender's vacated hex. If the CRT final result does not eliminate or force the defending MU to retreat, the defender’s hex remains controlled by the defender and may not be attacked again this Turn. MU that start with a zero (0) strength point marker are immediately eliminated if they suffer a one point or higher loss.

NOTE: Playtesting will determine if we should permit a defender to play a CD card from that player’s

hand to allow the defending Regiment/Brigade MU to choose one additional strength point loss instead

of retreating.

END OF TURN

● After each movement and attack is resolved, any CD cards used for such movement and attacks are immediately reshuffled back into each player’s CD deck. CD cards in a player’s hand may only be used once per Turn. Unused CD cards may also be held in a player’s hand for the next Turn.

● The Turn ends and players may use replacement points to increase Regiment/Brigade MU strength point markers, and choose/draw CD cards for the next Turn. This is listed on the scenario setup sheets or determined by dice rolls based on how much supplies are available for the next Turn.

● Each scenario has its own victory conditions which are determined by a combination of hexes your side controls and enemy Regiments/Brigades MU destroyed.

NOTE: Playtesting will determine if a player may only conduct attacks if they have CD cards in their

hand. Once they have used all their CD cards for that Turn, no more attacks may be made. Or, they may

make attacks, but there would be a big disadvantage without having any subunit SU that provide column

shifts and DRM – but the attacker could still try it if the situation is desperate.