



ONCE UPON A SEPTEMBER

By Mike Heiman, 2021, v0906

2 players

About 30 minutes

On September 1st, 1939, the Wehrmacht rolled into Poland and started the largest war in history.

Once Upon A September is a dice drafting/placement and card game where two players jockey for supremacy of various WWII campaigns by balancing Roll & Write mechanics found in games similar to *Clever!* and asymmetric COIN mechanics similar to games like *Shores of Tripoli*.

COMPONENTS NEEDED

Game PDF
(7 sheets, 1-sided)
2 Red D6
2 Blue D6
2 Green D6
1 First Player Coin
1 Meeple
A Pencil for each Player



OBJECTIVE

Gain more Stars ★ (Victory Points) than the other player. Some stars are earned during the game and some at the end of the game.

END OF GAME

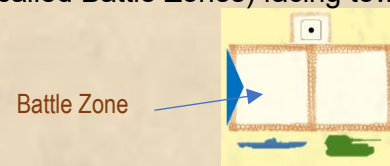
The game ends at the end of the round in which one of these two conditions are met:

- 1) Any 7 of the 10 capstone Battle Zone (BZ) Stars have been acquired.
- 2) The Atomic Project has been completed.

Campaign stars are totaled at the end of the game.

SETUP

- 1) Place the two halves of the Map together. The Tripartite player will sit at the bottom of the map and the Allied player will sit across the table at the top of the map. Players will write in the boxes (called Battle Zones) facing towards them.



- 2) Each player takes a pencil and their faction's Event Track page. These are unique to each player.
- 3) Give the Tripartite Player the First Player Coin and the 6 dice.
- 4) Leave the Meeple in the box for now.

GAMEPLAY

A round consists of rolling, drafting, and allocating the six dice. A turn is allocating one die (and playing "Sum 7 Combos" -- optional).

The three areas to allocate dice to are the three different sheets in front of you:

European Theatre of War (*ETOW*)
Pacific Theatre of War (*PacWar*)
Event Track Sheet

PHASE 1 – ROLL DICE

The First Player rolls 6 dice. The first Player can then choose to reroll any or all dice once.

PHASE 2 – DRAFT DICE

Starting with the Second player, alternate drafting the dice one at a time until each player has three dice. These dice are placed on the left side of the Player's Event and are called the **player's pool**. As dice are used, the player will move the die to the right side of their sheet. This area called is the **player's dump**.

PHASE 3 – ALLOCATE DICE

Starting with the First Player, players alternate allocating the values of their dice (one at a time) to each of the three sections of the gameboard in any order they want: European Theatre of War (ETOW), Pacific Theatre of War (PacWar), and Event Track. Players will write the numbers of their dice into individual boxes on the Theatre sheets, or circling and Xing out icons and numbers on the Event Track Sheet. After allocating a die, you must resolve all effects before your opponent allocates a die.

The Theatre sheets have Stars ☆☆☆☆☆ players will fill in as they gain them throughout the game – Tripartite at the bottom and Allies at the top. These sheets have a reference flowchart to let you know what to do during a round. And these sheets are made up of two smaller areas, campaigns and battle zones (BZs), where players will write numbers into individual boxes equal to the values of dice in their Pools.



Each theatre has five campaigns; two 6-BZ campaigns and three 4-BZ campaigns. Each campaign is worth a different number of Stars for whichever player has the highest total at the end of the game. The BZs must be filled in starting at the arrow and working your way towards the gray lock, without skipping a BZ; Left to Right for Tripartite, but Right to Left for Allied.

Both players allocate dice to blank BZs (in order) until a campaign is filled. The last BZ in each campaign is the "capstone battle." The first player to allocate a die to a capstone battle immediately gains the Star ☆ between the two last BZs.



X out the capstone star after a player fills it in their Star track. The game ends after finishing the round when the 7th Star is taken.

To allocate a die, you write the number rolled (1-6) in the next available BZ on a campaign starting from the arrow and moving to the capstone – When the game is over, the player with the highest sum from all of the boxes in a campaign wins that campaign and gains all of the stars after the capstone. (This campaign win is not determined until the end of the game since some Events can change the results of a battle zone.)

The die that you allocate must match the same color of the force under the blank BZ. For example, you can only allocate the result (1-6) of a **Blue** die to the squares that have a uboat  or battleship  under them.

There is a Bonus die between every pair of boxes – or Battle Zones. If your sum of the two battle zones is exactly 7, you gain the bonus (circling it to show that you gained it). X out the Bonus Box if you did not get a sum of 7. The number must be assigned to any BZ in the same Theatre. It's possible to create a rolling combination on one turn by gaining bonuses that trigger other bonuses. The bonus die is wild and counts as any color.

This bonus die is acquired only if both of the BZ's below it equal 7, as shown here.



Any die (except the bonus die) can be allocated to the Event Track page and the value of the die does not matter. Mark out an icon at the top of the page from left to right. Each icon has a different ability:






○ **Black Bubble** = Nothing














☞ **Black Flag** = Immediately gain the Flag ability.

■ **Red Cube (Person)** = Use one blue and one green die from your pool and and/or dump and apply it to the table. X out the number on the table and then circle the corresponding number in the list. Immediately complete the action for the Red Person gained.


Green Cube (Operations) = Use one red and one blue die from your pool and and/or dump and apply it to the table. X out the number on the table and then circle the corresponding number in the list. Immediately complete the action for the Green Operation gained.

Blue Cube (Events) = Use one red and one green die from your pool and and/or dump and apply it to the table. X out the number on the table and then circle the corresponding number in the list. Immediately complete the action for the Blue Event gained.

The Tripartite Player advanced on the Event Track and marked a blue cube. The dice in his pool and dump are    so he will have to use his  and  on the table, resulting in a 3 which he marks out, giving him **BANZAI**. He resolves the **BANZAI** effect immediately before ending his turn.

Events			2
	 	 	 
 	1	2	
 	4	5	6
 	7	8	9

If you do not have the two required dice for the table you must use then this action cannot be completed and is lost. If the number on the table has already has an X on it from a previous round then this action cannot be completed and is lost.

 **Purple Hourglass** = X a purple hourglass from the Atomic Project starting from the top and working your way down. Once all hourglasses have been Xed out, immediately resolve the Event, which will speed up the end of the game.

If actions from the Event sheet conflict with the standard rules, apply the Event sheet actions as an override of the regular rules.

Some Events will have you write and draw directly on the Theatre maps. Illustrations like Sonar, Train Tracks, and Aircraft Carrier require the player's creativity and artful imagination since there is no specific icon for these.

PHASE 4

At the end of the round, check to see if 8 Capstone Stars have been taken. If not, pass the first player coin to the other player and repeat phases 1 - 4 until the end of the game.

If so, move on to Final Scoring.

FINAL SCORING

Resolve all campaign victories by adding the numbers of each BZ and comparing the total against that of your opponent's. The player with the higher number gains all of the end Stars for that campaign. No player gets the end Stars if the sums are the same. No player gets the Capstone Stars if the final BZ is empty.

The player with the most stars after adding all campaigns is the winner.



Pass the First
Player coin.



Beginning with Player One, take turns
assigning one die at a time to **ETOW**, **PacWar**,
and **Event Track** (in any order).



Draft dice one at
a time starting
with Player Two.



Player One rolls
the 6 dice.
Reroll optional.



ONCE UPON A SEPTEMBER



Tripartite

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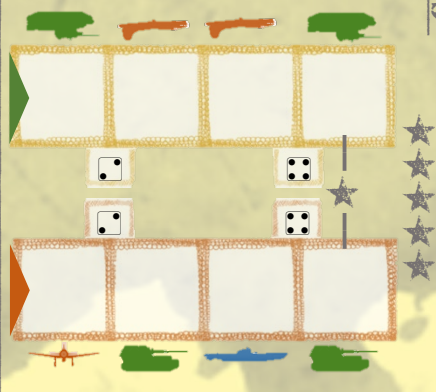


Allied



ONCE UPON A SEPTEMBER

INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA



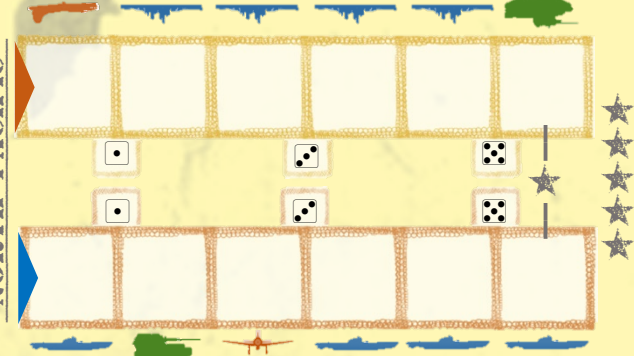
CHINA / MANCHURIA



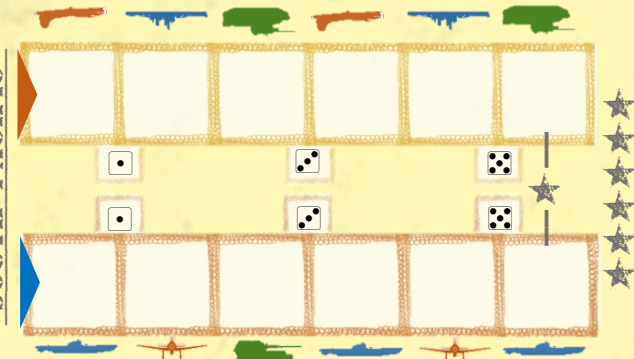
OCEANIA



NORTH PACIFIC



SOUTH PACIFIC



Player One rolls the 6 dice. Reroll optional.



Draft dice one at a time starting with Player Two.



Beginning with Player One, take turns assigning one die at a time to **ETOW**, **PacWar**, and **Event Track** (in any order).



Pass the First Player coin.



Tripartite Event Track



ATOMIC PROJECT



REFINERY



LABARTORIES



FIELD TESTS



WEAPONIZE

Write a 6 in any empty Capstone BZ and X out the BZ on the opponent's side.



People

	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●
● ●	①	②	③
● ● ●	④	⑤	⑥
● ● ● ●	⑦	⑧	⑨

Operations

	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●
● ●	①	②	③
● ● ●	④	⑤	⑥
● ● ● ●	⑦	⑧	⑨

Events

	● ●	● ● ●	● ● ● ●
● ●	①	②	③
● ● ●	④	⑤	⑥
● ● ● ●	⑦	⑧	⑨

- OPERATION BARBAROSSA** = Copy the result of the last die you placed anywhere into Eastern Europe. If you copied it into a **Green** BZ advance 1 on the Event Track.
- YOSHI NISHINA** = Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project.
 - YANG KYOUNGJONG** = Take the **Meeples** from the box or the other player. It's worth 2 **Stars** ★★ at end of game if you still have him.
 - ROSA DAINELLI** = Write a 2 in the next opponent's North Africa BZ. Then the opponent discards one die.
 - SORUKU YAMAMOTO** = Draw a shield under any **Blue** BZ and the two adjacent BZs in PacWar. These BZs cannot be Xed out by Events or Atomic Project.
 - ALBERT SPEER** = Gain and use a People Event you have not gained yet.
 - ARMEDEO GUILLET** = You may force the opponent to reroll any/all dice of your choice in their Pool.
 - ERICH HARTMANN** = Change any single **Red** Die (yours or opponent's) to any number.
 - AGENT CICERO** = Mark 2 **hourglasses** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project if you have fewer **hourglasses** than the opponent.
 - WERNHER VON BRAUN** = Reroll on the People Table and then advance 1 on the Event Track.
 - URANPROJEKT** = Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project.
 - DREAM OF A ROMAN ITALY** = Write "SPQR" under any BZ in ETOW. Gain a Star ★ and advance 1 on the event Track when you place a 5 or 6 there.
 - TORA TORA TORA** = X out a filled opponent **Blue** BZ.
 - TRIPARTITE PACT** = Select 3 dice immediately after they are rolled next round. Give the other 3 dice to your opponent.
 - JET FIGHTER** = Change the value of any one **Red** die in anybody's Pool.
 - ROCKETS** = Your opponent must discard one die of their choice.
 - BLITZKRIEG** = Copy the value of the die you placed in an ETOW BZ into the next adjacent ETOW BZ.
 - OPERATION PASTORIUS** = X out all opponent Bonuses in one campaign.
 - NATIONALISM** = You may change a 1 in any BZ to a 4. Gain 1 Star ★ if you do this.
 - ATOMIC TEST** = Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project.
 - DEUTSCHE REICHSBAHN** = Draw a Railroad under either Western Europe or Eastern Europe. You no longer are restricted to placing dice from left to right in that campaign.
 - BANZAI** = Place a 5 in Manchuria/China.
 - YAMATO AND MUSHASHI** = Gain 1 **Star** ★ or place a Blue 5 in any PacWar BZ, even if it's not the next open BZ.
 - SOCIAL PROPAGANDA** = Gain 2 **Stars** ★★
 - FEINT** = Tell your opponent which BZ they must place a die to next. It must be a legal move they could take on their own turn.
 - RADAR SCREEN** = Draw a radar symbol in front of any opponent campaign. You can force a **Red** die reroll right before an opponent places a **Red** die in that campaign.
 - DECIMAS MAS** = Gain the benefit of the next Bonus you X out in ETOW this round.
 - SYNTHETIC OIL PLANTS** = Advance 1 on the Event Track and gain 1 Star ★

Allied Event Track



ATOMIC PROJECT



REFINERY



LABARTORIES



FIELD TESTS



WEAPONIZE

Write a 6 in any empty Capstone BZ and X out the BZ on the opponent's side.



People

	1	2	3
	4	5	6
	7	8	9

Operations

	1	2	3
	4	5	6
	7	8	9

Events

	1	2	3
	4	5	6
	7	8	9

T34 MASS PRODUCTION = Place a 5 in the next available Eastern Europe BZ. If the BZ is **Green**, gain 1 **Star**. ★

- J ROBERT OPPENHEIMER** = Mark one **hourglasses** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project.
- YANG KYOUNGJONG** = Take the **Meeple** from the box or the other player. It's worth 2 **Stars** ★★ at end of game if you still have him.
- CHARLES LUCIANO** = Add a 4 to the next empty BZ in Trans Atlantic or South Pacific campaign.
- MARIA GOEPPERT MAYER** = Pull a die. Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Bomb if it's **Blue**. Place the die back into the bag.
- BENJAMIN DAVIS JR** = Circle an opponent's **Red** BZ icon. The opponent can only put a **Red** 1 or **Red** 2 in that BZ.
- MADAME FOURCARDE** = Your opponent must reroll a die of your choice from their Pool. If a 6 is rolled, the die is discarded.
- LACCHIMAN GURUNG** = Place a **Green** 4 in any friendly **Green** BZ.
- ALAN TURING** = Immediately change the opponent's dice to any facing you want.
- LYUDMILA PAVLICHENKO** = Opponent immediately discards 1 **Green** die.
- MANHATTAN PROJECT** = Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Bomb.
- ROSIE THE RIVITER** = You may double the result of all dice in your Pool that are 1-3.
- BLETCHLEY PARK** = You may trade any die in your Pool with one die in your opponent's Pool, and then immediately play the exchanged die.
- EXPEDITIONARY FORCE** = Roll any die in your Dump. Place it in any legal BZ.
- LEND LEASE PROGRAM** = Draw a **Star** ★ under any empty BZ. Gain 1 **Star** ★ when you place there.
- DOUBLE-CROSS SYSTEM** = Cross out 1 undiscovered Person icon on your opponent's Event Track. That Person no longer exists.
- FRENCH RESISTANCE** = X out an opponent BZ of 4 or less in ETOW.
- USS LAFFEY** = X out one **Red** opponent BZ result opposite of where you have already allocated a **Blue** die or add 1 to a **Blue** Die (cannot exceed 6).
- TRADE SANCTIONS** = Opponent immediately reduces the value of all dice in their Pool by 1 (cannot go below 1).
- ATOMIC TEST** = Mark 1 **hourglass** ⌚ off of the Atomic Project.
- PARATROOPERS** = Draw a Parachute symbol under every friendly **Red** and **Green** icon in one ETOW campaign. You may now place both **Red** and **Green** dice in those BZs.
- SOVIET WINTER** = X out any opponent BZ in Eastern Europe that has not been allocated or allocated a 1-3.
- THE KING'S SPEECH** = Choose any die in your Dump. Reroll it and gain **Stars** ★ equal to the difference of the original and reroll. Return it to the Dump.
- SCIENCE PROPAGANDA** = Gain 1 **Star** ★ and increase one on the Event Track.
- SUPER CARRIERS** = Draw a carrier symbol under every friendly **Red** and **Blue** icon in one PacWar campaign. You may now place both **Red** and **Blue** dice in those battles.
- ADVANCED SONAR** = Draw a sonar symbol in front of any opponent campaign. You can force a **Blue** die reroll right before an opponent places a **Blue** die in that campaign.
- NIGHT BOMBERS** = X out any opponent **Green** result in a BZ that's less than a **Red** BZ result in the same campaign.
- REFUGE SCIENTISTS** = Advance one on the Event Track, or mark 1 **hourglass**. ⌚