

ALL PASSENGERS ON BOARD, PLEASE

TICKET TO RIDE RAILS & SAILS

BUT... TRAIN OR BOAT?

WELCOME ABOARD

The long "saga" of Ticket to Ride goes on and this time the players have the opportunity to travel along the complete world, unless they prefer the fresh weather and the woods of the Great Lakes of North America: this is possible because the large map (540x970 mm) is printed on both sides. In addition to the four previous volumes (USA, Europe, Nordic Countries, Märklin) and about fifteen "official" expansions you may find on Internet more than 80 further expansions that cover the railways of all the world, including exotic ones like Greenland, Canary Islands, Madagascar, etc. and sometimes even where a railway does not exist at all. A great sign of the popularity of this system and Alan Moon, the designer, probably decided that in times of "globalization" it was necessary to offer a game covering the complete World, and as the Earth's surface is for two thirds water it was time to introduce boats.

And this is exactly what initially strikes when you open the big box (100 mm thick) of Ticket to Ride Rails & Sails: a lot of sea routes on the map and a lot of extra components (see picture 1)

As usual Days of Wonder made a superb packing with a thermoformed plastic tray with many specific slots to keep all the cards in order. In effect, we have FOUR different decks: trains (80 cards); boats (60 cards); tickets for map A (65 cards); tickets for map B (55 cards) and each one must be kept separate. We also find 165 colored plastic wagon miniatures (33 per color), 250 boats (50 per color) and 15 ports (3 per color). All the components are beautiful, easy to use and each color has its own container inside the thermoformed tray.

The set-up is similar to the other games but with three major differences:

1 - There are TWO different decks (trains and boats)

2 - There are THREE face up cards for each deck (instead of the usual five for one deck)

3 - The players receive a certain number of boats and wagons, depending on the scenario used (25 wagons and 50 boats for "World" or 33 and 32 for Great Lakes)



The objective of the game is to link the stations of your "tickets" by train or by boat and to build the three ports

Every player gets five Tickets at the beginning of the game and must keep at least THREE of them (but they may keep all five, if they wish). Now a major decision should be taken: the rules states that you may have a maximum of 60 miniatures (50 for the Great lakes) so each player, looking at his tickets, must discard 15 from the initial distribution. The rules suggest keeping 20 wagons and 40 boats for the first game (27 and 23 for Great Lakes) but



I strongly recommend leaving complete freedom to the players, if they know the rules of this series, as the decision should be based mainly on the tickets received. Hopefully during the game, it will be always possible to exchange "x" wagons for "y" boats (or vice versa) spending an action and 1 Victory Point (VP) per miniature.

The Turn options are the same, with the possibility to make one of the following:

- 1 - Take 2 cards from the table
- 2 - Play "X" cards of the same color (with or without jokers) and place the same number of miniatures on the board to connect two cities
- 3 - Take 4 tickets from the deck and keep at least one of them
- 4 - Build a Port

To the above you must add:

- 5 - Exchange "X" miniatures from your reserve with a similar number taken from the ones discarded at the beginning of the game and paying 1 VP per miniature.

There are obviously special rules created for this volume.

When you select the cards of option (1) you must decide from which deck: trains or boats? One each? Face up or covered? A mix of both? Then you must replace the two cards with new ones from ... any of the two decks: in other words, you may take a boat card and replace it with a train one, etc. This is the major Tactical change of Ticket to Ride Rails & Sails. You may find the Jokers ONLY in the train deck, so if you need some of them to complete a line

you must search on this deck as much as possible. Please also note that most of the lines are by sea, so a good reserve of boat cards is absolutely necessary.

of your turn, you pay the 2+2 cards and you place one of your miniature on that city. For each of your ports that you were unable to build you lose four VP: this seems a very light penalty, in-



The second major change are the PORTS unlike the stations of Ticket to Ride Europe (that gives four VP if they are not used) all the three ports should be build if you wish to have concrete chances to win the game. To build a port you need two wagons and two boats of the same color: those cards must also have a "port symbol" printed on them. There are only four train and four boat cards in each color with that symbol, so a good planning is necessary and when you find some of them you should keep them in your hand as long as possible. To build a port you should obviously have one of your lines arriving to a city with that symbol (anchor): then, as the sole action

deed, but if you build a port you get a minimum of 20 VP if you have just one of your tickets that has this port as destination, but this bonus rises to 30 VP if you have two lines and to 40 VP if you have three. This is why all the players start to get new tickets towards the end of the game, trying to find another "good" destination for their ports: the reward is really very important as you may easily get 60-90 VP just from your ports. Otherwise you still get VP as usual that depend on the length of the line that you build.

A close look at the cards allows us to discover that there are two kinds of wagons: the classic ones and the new ones for the ports (with an anchor and a blue water line under the rails, as we have already seen). The boat cards are also of two types: single or double boat. The first type allows you to play one miniature on the board with option (2) or to build a port (as the anchor icon shows) as option (4); the double allows you to place TWO miniatures on the board with just one card: so, for example, a line of seven cases may be covered by seven single boat cards of the same color or by three double and one single.

Another little modification is about the "difficult" lines: in the previous games of the series tunnels and ferries were resolved by turning over three cards from the deck and trying to





avoid penalties. In *Ticket to Ride Rails & Sails* things are simpler: you only must pay two train cards of the same color per "difficult" case and you may even pay a different color pair for each case. This means that if you have a line composed of three cases of difficult terrain you may cover them with two red, two green and two yellow wagons, or some other similar combination.

Pietro Cremona

This fifth volume of the Ticket to Ride series is mainly addressed to the more expert players, as it involves a considerable number of new rules and miniatures, so the general strategy must change significantly.

The last new rule is about the "Tour Tickets": these are tickets for touristic itineraries like, for example, Tehran-Lahore-Mumbai-Bangkok. If the players build their lines in the requested order they get more VP. In our example if all the above cities are connected the ticket grants 9 VP, but if the cities are connected exactly in the given order (i.e. starting in Tehran and finishing in Bangkok), the players receives 13 VP.

The mechanics of the Ticket to Ride series is actually well oiled and to avoid repetitively Alan Moon is obliged to design something really different for each new volume. With *Ticket to Ride Rails & Sails* he made something more than a simple modification of rules to just adapt the system to the characteristics of a new map. With two new transport types (trains and boats) and their separate card decks the game is surely more complex of its brothers, not only because you have now

to decide which deck to use, but you must also select which cards to use as replacements: this is nice but the playing time is increased.

You still do not have complete freedom in your choices as the Jokers are available ONLY in the train deck and you need them to complete some connections: therefore you are obliged to take cards from the train deck even if most of your tickets can be satisfied traveling on sea routes only.

The second interesting new feature of the game are the PORTS: if you are able to build them quickly and to search for new tickets with destinations to your ports you may (in theory) get up to 120 VP (40 per port). This means that you must start collecting the right cards since the beginning because you must try to spend them as soon as possible for your first port, and then follow up with the others. The objective is to arrive at least with two destinations to each port (90 VP in total) and therefore a good selection of your tickets is absolutely important.

In my opinion, this is not really a game for families or for casual players even if being very familiar with this series will surely help. This is because you should be prepared to program well in advance your "port" strategy and therefore not only to start with the right selection of the initial tickets but also to immediately search for the "port" cards.

We definitely liked this game. ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Alan R. Moon
Artist: Julian Delval, Cyrille Daujean
Price: ca. 60 Euros
Publisher: Days of Wonder 2016
www.asmodee.de

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
10+

TIME:
90+

BEWERTUNG

Track building
 Users: With friends
 Version: en
 Rules: de en es fr it nl pl
 In-game text: no

Comments:
 Asterion (it), Days of Wonder (en, fr, nl), Edge Entertainment (es), Rebel (pl)

Compares to:
 All other editions of Ticket to Ride

Other editions:
 Currently none



My rating:

★ ★ ★ ★ ★