

# FESTUNG: ORTONA

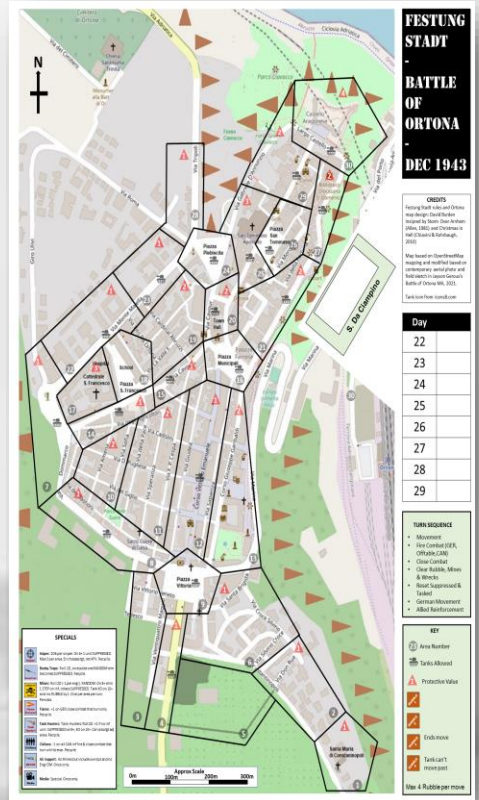
In December 1943 the Canadian Army, advancing up the East coast of Italy, ran into unexpectedly tough resistance in the town of Ortona. The Canadian eventually committed a whole Brigade to the fight, with the Germans fighting stubbornly for almost every inch. The battle was dubbed “Little Stalingrad” such was the destruction wrought upon the town.

Ortona is frequently used as a case study of urban combat, and included many of the features now common in urban combat including combined arms, mouse-holing, direct and indirect fire support, booby-traps, mines, deception, a civilian population and even the presence of the media.

*Festung: Ortona* is a solo/co-operative wargame. Its aim is to let players experience the challenges of urban combat operations as WW2 Brigade or Battalion commanders, and in particular the importance of combined arms, the use of heavy weapons, and the impact of rubble on urban operations. The game weaves in the narrative of the real battle in order to help immerse players in what the troops were experiencing on the ground.

The game uses an area-based movement system – but movement is constrained by rubble not distance. Some of the mechanics are derived from the *Storm Over Arnhem* series (Allen, 1981), and the rubble movement system is derived from *Christmas in Hell* (Chiavani, 2010). The ranged firing mechanic is completely novel and lets the player decide how much they will rely on using heavy weapons to help ensure success – but at the cost of increasing the rubble of the town.

The intention is to use the core *Festung* ruleset to play a variety of scenarios based on different urban battles of the later part of WW2, and potentially even on into the 1950s and 1960s. The core mechanics of *Festung* have also been used to create *Rubble Town* - a 20 minute card-based game.



<b>Players:</b> 1-4	<b>Complexity:</b> Low/Medium
<b>Game Time:</b> ~2 hours	<b>Umpire:</b> Not required
<b>Availability:</b> On request	<b>Mode:</b> Solo/Co-Op

Section	Platoon	Company	Battalion	Brigade	Division	Corps+
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*Festung: Ortona* was designed by David Burden, who is currently completing a PhD on Urban Wargaming at Bath Spa University. © 2024 David Burden

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