

Skies Above the Reich



Solitaire game depicting a Luftwaffe squadron of Bf109s struggling to deter and destroy the relentless daylight raids over Germany during WWII.

Rating: Not Rated Yet

Price

Price £94.95

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Manufacturer [GMT GAMES](#)

Description

Skies Above the Reich is a solitaire game depicting a Luftwaffe squadron of Bf109s struggling to deter and destroy the relentless daylight raids over Germany during World War Two. The player's individual aircraft, each represented by a stickered block, must confront the mighty "combat box" formation of the United States Army Air Force, a deadly terrain of B-17 Flying Fortresses. The game is a broad strokes depiction that presents the art of the desperate air war. Stretching from late 1942 to early 1945, Skies Above the Reich follows that trajectory in a series of missions strung together to make a campaign. Each mission will take a half hour or more to play, while a campaign can last anywhere between 6 to 60 missions.

The Mission

You select pilots and "attachments," such as gun pods, rockets, or added armor. You may also augment your attack with auxiliary aircraft such as Ju88s, Fw190s, or later in the war, jet propelled Me262s, the answer to the deadly P-51 escort fighter. Time in a mission is limited, so you must do your best to wreck the bomber formation as quickly as possible, while bringing home as many pilots as you can in order to muster a force for the next mission.

The Campaign

As tough as each mission can be, the real challenge is the campaign where you watch as your roster of pilots gradually shrinks. Some pilots will survive long enough to acquire ace skills, but you will be forced to replace downed or wounded pilots, and those young newcomers come "green". Some campaigns will end simply because you run out of pilots.

Full Campaigns follow the chronology of "seasons," each comprising a number of missions that your squadron flies striving to disrupt the American bomber raids. In a full campaign you must endure all seven seasons, keeping your squadron intact while making an impact on the relentless wave of bomber formations roaring over your homeland. A short campaign challenges you to win a single season, although you may wish to extend it to a second or third season depending on how well you fare.

Each season represents a distinct period of the war, as the campaign traverses the history of the air war. Bombers become more heavily armed but so too do your own Bf109 fighters. Early seasons are characterized by smaller formations, while seasons in the middle of the war are notable for the lack of fighter escort. And later seasons will put the squeeze on your squadron.

Basic and Advanced Games

In the basic game your goal is to knock bombers out of formation, or destroy them outright. The advanced game adds "pursuit" where you dispatch fighters to chase after and intercept bombers knocked out of the formation. Played out on an 8.5" x 11" map depicting a single bomber, pursuit makes the advanced game even more challenging.

The Two Player Game

You may also play this as a (un)cooperative game. Players each command a squadron of fighters and attack a formation of bombers together. Although players may lose together, even if they win the campaign only one of them may be declared the victor.

Components:

- 17" x 22" map board (double sided)
- 22" x 34" map board (double sided)
- 8.5" x 22" off-map display panel
- 8.5" x 11" pad: Pilot Roster & Staffel Log (double sided)
- two countersheets (one sheet of 1" counters; one sheet of 5/8" counters)
- one set of blocks (50 @ 1" x 1" x 1/4")
- two sticker sheets (8.5" x 11")
- 60 card deck of attack cards
- one tri-fold player aid (11" x 25.5", double sided)
- two bi-fold player aids (11" x 17", double sided)
- two pursuit maps (8.5" x 11", double sided)
- rulebook
- situation manual
- ten dice (10 sided; 5 red and 5 black)