

NEW!! VASL board upgrades ready to download!

[Editors note: This is an excerpt from a recent email I received and I thought I'd share this bit of important news to all you VSQ players. As you know VSQ utilizes the same mapboards as does VASL. The map trolls over at VASL have once again outdone themselves. I've downloaded these new boards and quickly fell in love with them. For instance, do you like playing the scenario 13 The Capture of Balta? Well, no longer do we have a problem with the terrain changes!! They incorporated all the terrain changes for each board depending on the scenario you may be playing. A really nifty feature. The boards also have the newer SK style to them, reflecting more realistic terrain features. To know more read on or scroll down to the end and begin downloading the boards, and don't forget to download the Overlays!]

RGB'n You... In all the old familiar places...

After more hours than we could possibly count, countless Hawaiian pizzas and 6-packs of Fanta Red Cream Soda, the Map Elves are ready to announce to release of the v5 VASL boards!

What's New This Time Out

- Redone colors. The palette is more muted, less garish. GONE is the "cool mint" color of Level 0 Open Ground (thunderous cheer).
- Scenario-Specific Overlays. For those scenarios requiring a little something special. Now you can play Agony of Doom the way it was meant to be played - all hexes of Hill 547 are woods, all hexes of hill 534 are Open Ground, and other terrain on these hill masses existing normally. Etc, etc, etc.
- Board-Specific Overlays. For funky things that happen to specific boards. Make the hexrow 1 side of board 8 turn to open water. Turn the level 1 grainfields of board 11 into Level 2 hills.
- Starter Kit LOS. We have mirrored the small in-hex LOS changes for boards that have been reissued in SK-style.
- Cut & Paste Terrain. Let's face it, not everybody's an artist. Drawing realistic terrain is really hard. But if you scan a board and force the terrain to take on a small-but-diverse set of specific colors, you can mimic the real-world boards pretty well. Pretty DARN well. Buildings, streams, gullies, graveyards, and shellholes all benefit from the Cut & Paste treatment here.
- Some SK-style map improvements, such as white hex ID's for places where the underlying terrain makes it hard to read. If you don't like them, you will be able to toggle them off in the next version of VASL

What's Not New This Time Out

- Desert. Haven't gotten to it yet. It could use the muted-color treatment.
- Deluxe. Haven't gotten to it yet.
- LOS works just like before.
- Draggable and Regular Overlays. Have been recolored, but not posted yet for download. This time out, we're also including transparent backgrounds for things like buildings and woods, so you can make your own little village on the hills of board 2 if you want.
- Some OTHER SK-style map features that we didn't want. No 3-D effect for walls and bridges. No bluish hue for brush. And no dark outlines for paved roads or hill crests - they look too pixellated at the 72dpi VASL board resolution.
- Stupid Road Tricks are gone. They were really always my Pet Rock, the stupid thing that *could* be done but really didn't *need* to be done. They finally succumbed to their low bang-per-buck ratio.
- Not enabled until the upcoming VASL upgrade... the ability to remove Walls and/or Hedges entirely. This is Counterman's Pet Rock, and well, he's earned it.

Compatibility

Gotcha covered.

The new (v5) boards should work fine with the existing version of VASL. You can freely mix and match them with the old (v4) boards, but here's hoping you like the new boards enough to toss the old ones out. For those die-hards who want to keep using the v4 boards because those match their Old School hardcopy boards, the next version of VASL will allow you to use the v4 boards and even toggle them to v5 colors so they don't look so hideous. We suggest you keep two board folders (v4boards and v5boards) for the nonce, while you're deciding which you like better.

Future Plans

With this release, all of the VASL boards have v5 colors, but not all of the hardcopy boards have been released with Starter-Kit graphics. Only boards 1-5, 8, 20-24, 42, 43, 48-55, and t-z have been given the SK treatment. When MMP releases the SK version of a board (perhaps as part of the Map Bundle, promised for later this year), we'll get to work and roll out the SK-style version of the VASL board shortly thereafter.

And for those of you who remember the Big Boffo Way Kewl New Thing that was promised in these forums some time ago, no, this isn't it! THAT surprise will have to wait another month or two!

Technically, a beta

For the nonce, we're calling these boards beta versions. Rodney Kinney is working on a new release of VASL/VASSAL, and before that comes out in a few weeks, we're calling this a beta testing period. We fully hope and expect there to be no problems with these boards, but if there are (OK, there always are...), then we'll have some time before the next VASL/VASSAL release to get them fixed.

Therefore, feedback is solicited. We want you to kick the tires, try out weird and funky terrain transformations, and generally let us know how you like the new colors and functionality. Can't promise we'll tweak everything to your liking, but we do want our users to be happy.

Enough Already! Where do I get these suckers?

Download them in roughly 10-board chunks from Tuomoland:

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds00-09.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds10-19.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds20-24.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds32-39.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds40-49.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bds50-55.zip>

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/v5bdst-z.zip>

And the recolored overlays. As usual, put these in a folder named **overlays** inside your v5boards folder:

<http://home.comcast.net/~tomrepetti/overlays.zip>

(Sorry, the transparent- background overlays still need tweaking. We'll post the link here when they become available)

When they get out of beta, we'll host them on the official VASL download site.

Thanks, and enjoy!