Age of Steam: Southeast Australia

by J C Lawrence

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Introduction:

Australia's first trains began operating in 1854 when the country was still a group of separate colonies. The first train lines in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide spanned only a few kilometres and almost without fail drove their parent companies either to bankruptcy or state-takeover. Torn by a wild mixture of track gauges, financial incompetence and an unforgiving landscape the early railway lines limited themselves to linking the major cities and ports of the south with nearby industrial and agricultural areas. But as settlement slowly moved inland in search of arable land and mining (gold!) the railways haltingly followed.

Age of Steam: South-East Australia is particularly recommended for 4 or 5 players

Playtesters:

Becca Tortell, Christopher George, David Eisen, Mike Bazynski, Walter.

Setup Changes:

1. Place two goods cubes in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Townsville, and one goods cube in each other city and town.
2. Each player starts the game with $12 and their income marker on "-4"
3. There is no share track

Rules Changes:

1. Shares are worth $6 and there is no limit to the number of shares a player may issue
2. Track prices:

   Plains (mid green): $2/tile
   Scrub (olive green): $3/tile
   Mountains (dark green): $4/tile
   Desert (yellow green): $4/tile
   Town: terrain price plus $1/exit
   Tile upgrades: $4 (all)

   The track hexes around Townsville are priced as marked (Townsville is further north than shown on the map)
3. The same player may not build multiple direct connections between the same two locations (towns or cities)
4. Track ownership markers and town markers are not limited. Use the track markers from another unused colour, coins or other convenient marker if needed
5. When issuing shares, move the player's income marker back by 1 space for each share issued
6. *(3 players only)* Locomotive allows a player to deliver across one track segment owned by another player without giving them income or using a Link. *(4+ players only)* Locomotive allows Links to be instantly increased by +1

7. Links may be increased up to a maximum value of 9
8. When increasing Links using the Locomotive action or by passing on a delivery, reduce the player's income by $2 for each +1 increase in Links
9. A town that is adjacent to a city may not be urbanised (Armidale, Newcastle, Wollongong)
10. Goods cubes on towns may only be delivered if track has been built on the town hex.
11. When a town is urbanised any goods cube on the town remains in the New City
12. Immediately upon each delivery the active player removes the top cube from the matching space on the Goods Production Chart for either the city the cube was delivered from or the city it was delivered to, and places them in that city on the board. The new goods cubes are immediately available for delivery. If there are no more cubes on the Goods Production Chart to remove for the desired city then a random cube is drawn from the cup and placed on the Goods Production Chart for that city. In the case that both Goods Production Chart columns are empty the goods cube may be drawn before assignment to a city
13. There is no Production action or Production Phase
14. For expenses players simply pay or get the value shown on the Income track to or from the bank. If a player's income is at $-10 or below during the expenses phase then they are bankrupt and out of the game
15. Income reduction is $2 for incomes of $1-$5, $4 for incomes of $6-$10, $6 for $11-$15, $8 for $16-$20 and $10 for everything larger than that
16. Victory Point calculation is: ((income*3)+track)