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Cartagena. 2

The Pirate's Nest

players: 2-5
age: 8 and up
length: 45 min

Overview

In the first Cartagena game, the players, as pirates, attempted to flee prison by making their way through a tunnel to a boat waiting for them at the end of the tunnel. But simply reaching the boat does not mean they have escaped as re-capture is always possible, perhaps, even likely. They will not be really safe until they reach their Pirate's Nest on Tortuga.

Each player leads a group of pirates to Pirate's Nest on Tortuga. The path leads the pirates through wild jungle and across the waters of open ocean to the island of Tortuga. In addition to the innate perils of the trip are the other pirates, as each group wants to be the first to arrive at Pirate's Nest and will do what they can to slow the others' progress. As soon as one player has all his pirates in Pirate's Nest, he can raise the Jolly Roger and win the game.

Contents

- 5 game board pieces with 7 symbols: parrot, treasure chest, spy glass, dukats, treasure map, cannon, and compass
- 3 game board parts: boat, Pirate's Nest, and pirate flag: Jolly Roger
- 105 cards, 15 each with the symbols: parrot, treasure chest, spy glass, dukats, treasure map, cannon, and compass, one card of each symbol has a golden border, giving it special abilities (see Freebooter below)
- 30 pirate figures, 6 each in 5 different colors
- 1 rule booklet

Preparation

Each player selects a color and takes the pirate figures in that color. Return remaining pirate figures to the box. Form the game board pieces into two islands - one with 2 pieces and the other with 3 pieces. Place the boat next to the smaller island in the ocean between the 2 islands. The players place their pirates on the left side of the smaller island. Place the goal, Pirate's Nest, on the far side of the larger island. The game setup should look something like that shown below (a game in progress for four players).



Shuffle the cards and deal 7 face down to each player. Place the rest of the cards face down on the table as a supply. The players keep their cards in their hands secret from the other players throughout the game.

Playing the game

The players choose a starting player who takes the first turn. Play then continues in clockwise order. The players try to move their pirates as quickly as possible, first across the small island, then, with the boat to the large island, and finally, across the large island to Pirate's Nest, to be the first player to have all their pirates in Pirate's Nest.

Game turn

On a player's turn, he takes 1, 2, or 3 actions (never none). For these actions, he has three possibilities:

- play a card from his hand and move one of his pirates forward
- move an opponent's pirate forward and take a card (or two) from the supply
- move the boat

From these three possible actions, the player may choose freely. He may choose the same action more than once, may choose different actions, may perform the actions in any order, may perform them on the same pirate or on different pirates as he chooses. He must perform at least one action and never more than three actions. Otherwise, his choices are quite open.

Play a card from his hand and move one of his pirates forward

The player chooses one card from his hand and places it face up on the discard stack. Then he chooses one of his pirates and moves it forward to the next unoccupied space with the same symbol as shown on the card he played. He skips over spaces with other symbols or occupied (with one or more pirates) spaces with the same symbol. If there are no unoccupied spaces with the matching symbol between where a pirate stands on the first island and the boat, the player moves the pirate directly to the boat. If a pirate is on the second island and there are no unoccupied spaces with a matching symbol between the pirate and Pirate's Nest, he moves directly to Pirate's Nest. The boat can never have more than 3 pirates of the same color. The player can choose to move any of his pirates, whether they are at the start position, on the first island, on the second island, or on the boat at the start of the second island. The player may use different figures for each action or may use the same for all 3.

Move an opponent's pirate to take a card from the supply

The player chooses one of any opponent's pirates and moves it forward to the next space that has 1 or 2 pirates. It matters not which pirate the player chooses (as long as it is not his own, or which symbol is on the space he moves the pirate to). Empty spaces or spaces with 3 pirates must be skipped, but a space with just 1 or 2 pirates may not be skipped. The player must move the chosen pirate to the first such space. When the player moves an opponent's pirate to a space with 1 pirate, he takes 1 card from the card supply. When the player moves an opponent's pirate to a space with 2 pirates, he takes 2 cards from the supply. The player may choose to move an opponent's pirate that is anywhere on the board, even at the start position on the first island or on the boat at the start of the second island. If there are no spaces with 1 or 2 pirates on the first island between the chosen pirate and the boat, the player moves the pirate to the boat and takes 2 cards from the supply. The player may only move such a pirate if there are not already 3 pirates of that color in the boat. During his 3 actions, the player may move the same or different pirates as he chooses.

Move the boat

The rules governing boat movement are:

The boat may be moved from the first island to the second island only by a player who has at least one pirate on the boat.

The boat may be moved back from the second island to the first island only by players who have at least one pirate remaining on the first island.

There may never be more than 3 pirates of the same color in the boat.

Moving the boat does not cost cards, just an action. Exception: the captain. Pirates remain on the boat until moved off the boat at the second island. Pirates on the boat when it is returned to the first island move with it.

Rule summary

1 - 3 actions

move pirate forward
take card (s)
move boat

move pirate forward:

play card
move pirate to the
next empty matching
space

take a card:

move an opponent's
pirate to the next occupied
space or the boat

there: - player draws:
1 pirate - 1 card
2 pirates - 2 cards
boat - always 2 cards

skip empty spaces and
spaces with 3 pirates

move the boat

is 1 action

forward only if the player
has a pirate on board
backward only if the player
has a pirate on island 1
limit of 3 pirates per
color on the boat

The captain

If, at the beginning of his turn, a player has more pirates on the boat than any other player, or is tied with the most pirates on the boat, he may move the boat without using an action. To move the boat back to the small island, however, the captain must have at least one pirate on the small island.

Freebooter

A player may never have more than 7 cards in his hand.

However, pirates are not much for following rules, so players may accumulate more than 7 cards in their hands until they are caught. And just how are they caught? When a player plays a card with a golden border, all players (even the one who played the card) must check their hand sizes. If a player has more than 7 cards in his hand, he must immediately discard the surplus.

Game end and scoring

The first player to move all his pirates to Pirate's Nest and raise the Jolly Roger wins the game! So, as soon as a player moves his last pirate to Pirate's Nest, he raises the Jolly Roger by moving the Jolly Roger into Pirate's Nest, ending the game. Moving the Jolly Roger takes 1 action, so the player might have to wait until his next turn if he used his last action to move his last pirate into Pirate's Nest.

Example

Two figures are shown on the separate page of a game for 4 players. In figure 1, it is the yellow player's turn and he has, as is inevitable, many choices for his 3 actions. Below are three of the possibilities yellow could choose from:

1. Yellow can play 3 cards from his hand and move 3 of his pirates forward. First, however, as he has more pirates on the boat than either red or blue and the same number as green, he is the captain and chooses to move the boat to the large island. Then yellow plays a compass card and moves one of his pirates from the boat to space 33 on the large island. Next, with a second compass card, he moves a second pirate from the boat directly to Pirate's Nest. Finally, with a third compass card, he moves his pirate from space 28 to Pirate's Nest.

It is very enticing to move 3 pirates so far forward so fast, but it can be dangerous!

For, now that yellow has "paved the compass way" to the Pirate's Nest, other players with compass cards could also quickly move their pirates to the Pirate's Nest. It might be better for the yellow player to move his pirate from space 33 to the Pirate's Nest, rather than from space 28.

2. For a completely different tactic, yellow could play to get 6 new cards instead of moving any of his own pirates. First, the yellow player moves the blue pirate from space 13 to space 14 and draws 2 cards. Then, he moves the green pirate from space 3 to space 5 and draws 2 more cards. Finally, he moves the red pirate from the start position to space 3 and draws another 2 cards. With so many cards, the yellow player will have much flexibility in the next rounds to move his pirates forward. On the other hand, yellow has 3 pirates rather far back (on space 3 and the start position) and is now at risk of having to discard his extra cards (more than 7) if someone plays a golden-bordered card.

3. A combination of the two above possibilities is likely to be the best strategy. First, since the yellow player is the captain, he moves the boat to the large island without spending an action. Then yellow plays a compass card and moves one of his pirates from the boat to space 33 on the large island. Next, with a second compass card, he moves a second pirate from the boat directly to the Pirate's Nest. Finally, he moves a blue pirate from space 25 to 28. This last move has two advantages: it allows yellow to draw 2 cards and it interrupts the string of occupied compass spaces so that other players cannot use that to make a fast trip to the Pirate's Nest.

Captain:

most or tied with most, may move the boat for no action cost at the start of his turn.

Freebooter:

When a gold-bordered card is played, discard over 7 cards.

Game end & scoring:

Game end: 1st player to move all pirates to Pirate's Nest and raise Jolly Roger wins. Raising Jolly Roger takes 1 action.



Assuming yellow chose the third option, the next player, blue, would begin his turn as shown in figure 2 on the separate example page. He would also have several options. Three are described below:

1. Blue first moves the boat back to the small island. As blue is not the captain, but has a pirate on the small island, blue uses his first action to do this. Next, he plays a treasure chest and moves his pirate from space 13 to the boat. Finally, he moves the green pirate from space 14 to the boat and draws 2 cards.
2. Or, blue first plays a parrot and moves his pirate from the boat to space 23. Next, blue moves the boat back to the small island. Finally, blue plays any card and moves his pirate on space 13 to the boat.
3. Or, blue moves a red pirate from the start position to space 5 (space 3 already has 3 pirates) and draws 2 cards. Next, blue plays a cannon and moves his pirate from space 18 to space 26. Finally, he plays a compass and moves his pirate from space 26 to Pirate's Nest.

It is not important to move one or two pirates quickly to the Pirate's Nest. Rather, it is usually a better strategy to arrange to move all your pirates at roughly the same rate toward the Pirate's Nest, so that some pirates do not fall far behind your opponents' pirates. Also, watch carefully that you do not fill up all the spaces of one symbol, which will make it easy for an opponent to move his pirates quickly to the Pirate's Nest.

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