



CATAN - Legend of the Conquerors

Dear Cities & Knights fans,

More than 20 years ago – in autumn of 1998 – the CATAN – Cities & Knights expansion was released in Germany. Since then, Cities & Knights has become very popular among advanced Catan players, and has been continuously available in retail stores and online. We considered it appropriate to acknowledge this great success and celebrate it with you by means of an anniversary game – a scenario for Cities & Knights.



The German version of the anniversary game – entitled CATAN – Die Legende der Eroberer – was released in July 2019, almost a year after the actual C&K anniversary, owing to its long development time and quite sizable content.

CATAN – Legend of the Conquerors, the English version of the game, is expected to be published in July of 2020.

About four years ago, my son Benjamin and I started developing this game. Strictly speaking, it's three games, or rather, three successive scenarios that we have woven into an accompanying story.

The story of Cities & Knights is set in the first 100 years after Catan was discovered by seafarers of the Old World (according to the Old World's calendar, this occurred around 1420 CE). Trade and sharing of knowledge with the countries of the Old World allowed Catan to flourish. Soon the island had aqueducts, trading companies, and its first university.

However, Catan's wealth also attracted barbarians who ransacked the regions and cities of Catan. Thanks to their knights, the Catanians were able to repel the barbarians.

The story of Cities & Knights is followed by the story of CATAN – Legend of the Conquerors. A powerful Old World country threatens Catan's freedom and independence. A large army of that country conquers the north of Catan. The Catanians have little chance of successfully opposing the conquerors. Catan's destruction seems inevitable, but then another country of the Old World comes to the rescue.

In three chapters (or scenarios) the players adopt the role of commanders of the Catanian troops who jointly try to stop the conquest of the entire island and drive the conquerors away from Catan.

The story of CATAN – Legend of the Conquerors

Chapter 1

Part 1

Introduction

670 years have passed since the first settlers arrived on Catan. A fleet consisting of many caravels loaded with warriors had been sighted on its way to Catan.

Thora

Thora stared out the window. Dark rain clouds shrouded the countryside, making everything look gray and sad. A lightning bolt struck the ground, its glare soon followed by a deep rumble. It was a gloomy spectacle, as gloomy as Thora's thoughts, which desperately revolved around the question of how it could happen that Catan, her beloved homeland, was at the edge of an abyss.

Thora remembered the manuscript traditions she had read in her youth.

After her ancestors' arrival on Catan, on occasions many decades apart, fate had brought other seafarers from the Old World to their island. In most cases, severe storms had turned proud seafarers into helpless castaways stranded on the coasts of Catan. Other seafarers had simply lost their bearing due to insufficient means of navigation; emaciated and close to dying of thirst, they were lucky enough to reach the shores of Catan.

The newcomers weren't always well-disposed toward the island's inhabitants, but in the end, they had to come to terms with their hosts because most of the unfortunate sailors deemed it impossible to survive the long, dangerous voyage home in their few longships that had remained intact.

Thora clearly remembered some evenings of her childhood when her grandmother told her and her siblings exciting stories, her words accompanied by lively gestures. One of those stories was about a day when her grandmother was still a child herself.

"That day," her grandmother said, "ships no Catanian had ever seen before entered the harbor of our capital – massive, pot-bellied ships with four huge masts from which hung sails that could easily have covered an entire homestead."

Thora smiled. At the time, her grandmother had definitely exaggerated a lot. But the caravels, as the foreign seafarers called their ships, were ocean-going and able to carry

their crews back to their homeland much more safely than the longships known to the Catanians.

Back then – now almost 100 years ago – Catan had been happened upon by the Old World and was since being visited by its seafarers on a regular basis.

A lightning bolt hit one of the towers of the council hall, and the almost simultaneous, roaring thunderclap made Thora tremble. Was that a bad omen for the future?

Thora took a deep breath.

She had to admit to herself that the continuous contact with the Old World during the first decades after the discovery of their island had definitely brought many benefits. Trade with the Old World made Catan flourish.

It wasn't only the profitable exchange of goods and resources – a lively exchange of knowledge was also taking place. Soon aqueducts were built on Catan to supply the cities with fresh water, guilds and trading houses stimulated Catan's economy, and just a few years ago the island's first university had been established in the capital of Catan.

However, Catan's wealth did not only attract peace-loving merchants; greedy adventurers came, as well. Initially, small groups of them plundered the regions of Catan and returned with their loot to their ships. They were brutal and unscrupulous, which is why the Catanians gave them the derogatory name "barbarians."

When the barbarians became more numerous and more brazen and even pillaged a city, threatening to burn it down, the Council of Catan decided to raise a standing army and reinforce the fleet. The Catanians finally managed to repel the marauding hordes and since then, the barbarian attacks were far less successful.

But now everything is different, Thora thought. A new chapter in Catan's history had begun. It wasn't a promising chapter...

Part 2

Aegis put her hand on her sister's shoulder. "There were too many of them, Thora. The caravels of the conquerors were armed with cannons. After the first cannon fire, I gave the order to retreat. I didn't want to risk losing all our ships."



“I know,” Thora turned around to face Aegis. Not only was Aegis her sister, she was also the commander of the Catanian fleet.

“A short while ago, a messenger from the North came. He informed the Council that the enemy fleet has landed on the Northwest Coast. The conquerors have started to build a fortified camp.” Thora hesitated before putting the impending disaster into words. “This time, it’s not barbarian hordes that want to ransack our land; this time, a powerful enemy is coming with an army.”

Almost whispering, she continued. “This time, Aegis, it’s not about skirmishes with the barbarians – this time, our survival and our freedom are at stake.”

Aegis agreed with her older sister. Like herself, Thora was in the prime of her life and had a similarly well-toned physique. The streaks of silver in her brown hair and some incipient wrinkles added maturity and authority to her pleasant appearance.

When the Council elected Thora commander-in-chief of the Catanian army and temporary sole ruler, she had replaced her councilwoman attire with pants, boots, and a plain girdled tunic. She didn’t want to dress differently than the Catanians she had to send into battle against the conquerors.

There was a knock at the door, and warlord Roven entered the office of the commander-in-chief. Behind him, hidden by Roven’s massive figure, a small-boned woman with wheat blonde hair and a pretty face scampered into the room and self-assuredly positioned herself beside Roven.

Despite the gravity of the situation, Thora had to smile at the unlikely couple. Next to Roven, who was two heads taller and three times wider, brawny, and dark-skinned, Lea, Catan’s supreme healer, looked as dainty as an elf.

Roven cleared his throat and announced in a sonorous voice that measured up to his imposing appearance, “The troops are ready to leave, Thora.”

He sighed. “Unfortunately, Lea insisted on leading the healer squad herself,” with a facial expression of both irritation and concern, he looked down at his petite wife.

“Come on, big guy. Don’t worry about me. I know how to look after myself,” Lea put her delicate hand into Roven’s big paw and gave him an encouraging smile.

Thora was grateful for the respected healer’s support. During the battles, the infantry Roven was leading to the northwest of Catan and the men and women he intended to recruit in the North would be in dire need of her healing skills.

“Abide by my order, Roven. I’m not ordering you to expel the conquerors from the northwest of our island. You know as well as I do that you can’t achieve this, given the superior number of invaders. Just hold them back as long as possible and retreat eastward early enough to keep our troops from suffering major losses. We must buy time to organize our defense,” Thora said.

Roven nodded briefly. “We’ll try to lure individual groups of barbarians into traps and to ambush them.” Visibly annoyed, he continued, “By the way, I, too, am anxious not to needlessly gamble with the lives of the Catanians I’m entrusted with.”

Roven made a scant bow to Thora and Aegis. Without further talk, together with Lea, he briskly left the commander-in-chief’s office.

“I think you have offended his pride, Thora. Sometimes Roven acts a bit impulsively, but you can trust that he will obey your orders,” Aegis said.

“I hope so, Aegis,” Thora sighed. “I would have liked to assign Dagur to him. Dagur is level-headed and intelligent and could have some moderating effect on Roven. But we need him and his cavalry here, in case it occurs to the conquerors to attack our south coast too.”

Thora resignedly stared out on the rainy landscape. “We might not be able to stop the enemy from conquering our island. Unless a miracle happens...”

Part 3

Before you lies the northwest of Catan.

Each player has already built two settlements and one city. You know that the first conquerors will soon land on the sea hexes marked with landing markers.

The invaders won't waste any time to penetrate into the interior of the island to conquer the northwest of Catan. That won't be difficult for them because the conquerors are in the majority.



Your shared task is to resist the intruders as long as possible and prevent them from conquering more than seven hexes with number tokens (in a three-player game) and more than 10 hexes with number tokens (in a four-player game).

Each player receives two personal overview cards – one describes the conditions for a player's victory (or the defeat of everyone), and the other describes the “Attack of the Barbarians” event, “The Conquerors Land” event, and “The Conquerors Advance” event.

When will the conquerors will put an end to your placid life as settlers? Don't worry – you will first have time to spread out in the northwest of Catan by building roads, settlements, and cities and to build and promote new knights.

Don't forget: The more knights you have, the stronger they are, and the better you work together to coordinate your knights with the other players, the greater your chance to defy the conquerors.

The Chapter 1 Tile determines when the conquerors arrive. If you roll a ship on the event die, move the barbarian ship to the next space, just as in Cities & Knights. If you move the ship to a space showing a double-sided ax, a battle ensues according to the "Attack of the Barbarians" event you're already familiar with from Cities & Knights.

While the conquerors seek to defeat and overtake Catan, the barbarians only want to plunder your cities and make off with the loot. Unfortunately, we will not save you from having to face two enemies: the barbarians and the conquerors, but we are convinced that you can do it.

The conquerors land on Catan in four waves, and in each wave they are stronger. If you move the barbarian ship to a space depicting a purple flag, the conquerors land and you must place a conqueror on each hex marked with a landing marker. When the barbarian ship moves to the space with a "2" flag, you conquerors of strength "2." When the ship moves to the space with a "3" flag, place conquerors of strength "3," and so forth.

Needless to say, the conquerors don't calmly remain on their landing hexes. When you move the barbarian ship to a "The Conquerors Advance" event space, you advance each conqueror one hex. The direction in which you move the conquerors is determined by means of the directional die and the directional token.

For the left conqueror shown in the picture, a yellow sword was rolled. According to the direction of the yellow sword depicted on the directional token, you'd move that conqueror straight ahead. From left to right, you then also move the other conquerors in the direction indicated by the swords on the directional token, depending on whether the red, yellow, or green sword was rolled on the directional die.



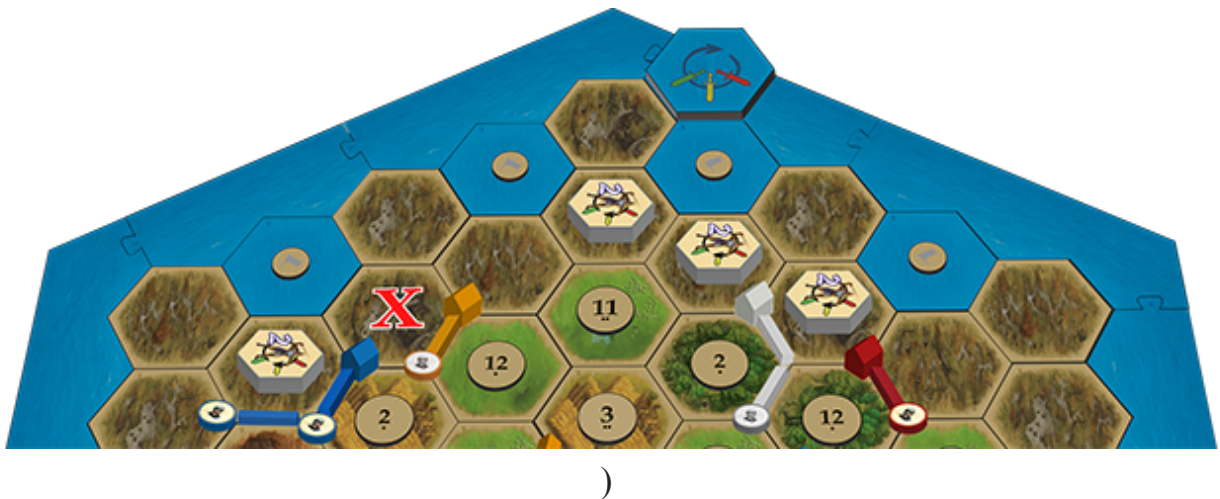
If you move a conqueror to a hex with a number token, that hex is conquered, and you must turn its number token over. If you move it to a hex that is occupied by one or more knights, a battle ensues. In my next blog post, I'll let you know how to wage such a battle.



Part 4

The Conquerors Attack - The Fight

In the last part I explained how to determine the direction of the conquerors' movement. In the following picture, the conquerors have already been moved in the determined direction.



The leftmost conqueror ended up on a hex next to Blue's two knights. The conqueror has 2 strength points. Because each of the knights has 1 strength point, their combined strength is 2, and there is a standoff.

If the conqueror had more strength points than the knights' combined strength, it would have defeated the knights. In that case, the Blue player would have been forced to return the knights to their supply. If the knights combined had more strength points than the conqueror, the conqueror would have lost the battle and would have been removed from the game board.

If Blue promotes one of their knights during one of their following turns, the standoff is broken and the conqueror is defeated.

Yellow has promoted their knight. Moving the leftmost conqueror from its starting hex to the hex marked with a red "x" would have resulted in a standoff.

The movement of the next conquerors doesn't trigger any conflicts with knights, and neither does the movement of the conqueror on the right because in the previous rounds, White has built a road and cleverly moved a knight backward one intersection. With the knight in this position, White and Red can better defend the forest hex marked with the "12" number token.



Let's take a look at the following picture to find out what could happen in that section of the game board after the strength 3 conquerors have arrived and the barbarian ship has been moved to "The Conquerors Advance."

For the strength 3 conqueror on the right, a yellow sword was rolled. The conqueror is moved from its landing hex straight ahead to a hex which has 2 Red knights with a combined strength of 3. A standoff ensues.

For the next conqueror on the left, a red sword is rolled. The hex located in this direction is already occupied by another conqueror, so the left conqueror is moved to the next unoccupied hex in clockwise direction according to the directional token.



It moves to the 12 forest hex which has 2 knights with a combined strength of 3. The conqueror is weaker, so it is removed immediately. As a reward for their victory, both Red and White can move their respective markers upward 1 space on the hero track.

In Chapter 1, solely by successfully combating the conquerors, each player can obtain up to 6 victory points. As you might guess, without getting at least some of those victory points, it is almost impossible to reach 13 victory points – especially since you are not allowed to build metropolises in this chapter. Who would have time to build a university or a trading house when the enemy is at the door or has already knocked it down? Therefore, city improvement ends with the third level in this chapter.

In Chapters 1 and 2, new politics cards replace your familiar politics progress cards. The new cards no longer allow you to bother each other, but rather foster cooperation between the players. This puts you in a better position to push back against the conquerors. Below I'm showing you a selection of the new politics cards.



Chapter 2

Part 1

Introduction

Under the command of warlord Roven, the Catanians had successfully slowed down the advance of the enemy army. At the right moment – before the Catanian troops would suffer major losses – Roven retreated with most of the population of the Northwest to the northeastern part of the island.

Captain Wyler

Thora was ready to welcome the captain. Accompanied by a guard, a wiry, older sailor whose weather-beaten face testified to many years spent at sea entered her office.

“I salute you, Captain Wyler. I hope you had a smooth passage and are satisfied with your commercial transactions.”

With a mischievous smile, Wyler scrutinized the Catanian ruler standing upright and proudly in front of him. “Oh, commercial transactions? Of course, that’s why I’m here. But this time there’s a bit more at stake. I’m acting on behalf of my king, who sends you greetings and wants to propose a very special business deal.”

Thora perked up her ears. Captain Wyler came from a country from the Old World that Catan had good trade relations with. If the king of that country was proposing a business deal, it might be helpful in the struggle against the conquerors. It seemed as if the captain had guessed Thora’s thoughts.

“My king wants to help you fight your enemy. As a sign of his friendship and goodwill, he sends you three caravels equipped with cannons. They are anchored in the harbor. You can man them with your people at any time. In the holds of the ships you’ll find more cannons, armors, and longbows, which should allow your fighters to stop your enemy’s advance.”

Thora could hardly believe her luck. Was this the miracle she had hoped for?

“Captain Wyler, that sounds very generous of your king. However, you mentioned a business deal. So, what’s the catch? And if your king apparently is so interested in our independence, why doesn’t he send troops right away to support our fight?”

Wyler looked Thora straight in the eye. “Our king cannot openly side with you, because at the moment he doesn’t want to risk a war with the country that is trying to conquer your island. But he doesn’t want Catan to fall into the hands of one of his biggest

competitors in the Old World, either. And regarding your second question, of course our king isn't altruistic, or else he wouldn't be king. In exchange for the ships and weapons, he wants an appropriate amount of amber and of the wine that so superbly grows on the slopes of your beautiful island. You can discuss the amounts with our negotiators. If you deliver the agreed amounts on my next visit, we will provide you with more high-quality weapons and armor."

Thora mulled over the offer. Amber was found on Catan at many locations and didn't have a particularly high value on the island. Even less well-off families were able to afford amber jewelry. Given the circumstances, for the sake of their independence, people would surely be willing to sacrifice their amber jewelry and abstain from consuming Catanian wine for a while.

"If you don't demand outrageously high amounts of amber and wine, we're in agreement. Before you leave, though, answer me one more question: Why are the countries of the Old World suddenly so interested in Catan?"

"Can't you guess, dear Thora? For one thing, Catan is a rich island, and for another, it is located exactly between the Old World and the New World in the West that was discovered more than 20 years ago. Your enemy needs your island as a base for their journeys between the two worlds. By the way, my king is sure that due to his kindness you will allow him to establish a base."

Thora had understood the veiled threat. This king definitely didn't act selflessly, but as long as she could save Catan's independence, she was fine with any concession.

Part 2

The captain bid farewell and Thora sent for her husband, who was currently in the city. It didn't take Dagur long to arrive at his wife's office.

When the broad-shouldered cavalry leader greeted Thora, he had an expression of respect and high esteem in his eyes. After a warm embrace, Thora told her husband about her conversation with Captain Wyler.

Dagur was a rather down-to-earth man who preferred being outdoors riding a horse over sitting in a dark office occupying himself with state affairs. However, he had listened with interest.

“That's really good news, Thora. Although it seems to me that we are a pawn in the hands of the powers of the Old World, we may get a chance to defend our freedom.”

With a crooked smile that Thora so loved about him, Dagur changed the subject.

“By the way, I talked to one of our spies. He reported that the conquerors currently do not intend to advance southward but first want to attack our troops in the Northeast. Therefore, I suggest that I ride north with part of my cavalry, to help our people there.”

“I hope the spy is reliable.” Thora hesitated for a moment, as if weighing the pros and cons of her options. “All right, then I'll ride with you and leave the South in the hands of my deputy. I think our troops expect me to lead them as their commander-in-chief.”

A couple of days later, Thora had taken all necessary steps. She had briefed her deputy about the ongoing state affairs and entrusted him with the defense of the South.

The three ships Captain Wyler had provided were heading toward Catan's northeast, to supply the defenders with weapons and armors. Together with Dagur and part of his cavalry, Thora also set out for the Northeast, where she had to stop the advance of the enemy.



The picture below shows the northeast of Catan after the set-up phase.

As in Chapter 1, at the beginning of the game, each player already has 2 settlements and 1 city. Each city also has a city wall, and each player has 1 basic knight at their command for free.

You definitely need this reinforcement because after conquering the northwest coast of Catan (Chapter 1), even stronger invading troops penetrate into the northeast. This time, when the barbarian ship is moved to the corresponding event space on the Chapter 2 tile, the conquerors appear on the frame hexes marked with the landing markers. The same rules described in Chapter 1 for the advance of the conquerors and their battle with the knights also apply. Don't let the wine tokens and amber tokens on the game board confuse you. I'll explain their meaning in a subsequent blog post.



As in Chapter 1, in Chapter 2 you must also prevent the invaders from conquering a certain number of hexes. In a 4-player game, they must not conquer more than 4 and in a 3-player game not more than 3 hexes marked with number tokens.

“Oh dear,” you might think, “That’s much fewer hexes the enemy may conquer than in Chapter 1. How are we supposed to make that happen if the conquerors have gotten even stronger?”

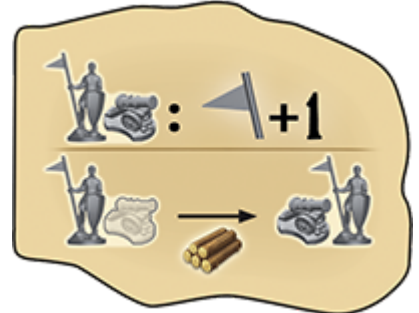
Remember Captain Wyler, in the second part of the story of Chapter 2 brought caravels loaded with cannons and weapons? The holds of his caravels also contained horses. Those horses promote your knights to cavalry, and a knight equipped with a cannon becomes a cannoneer. These new units allow you to combat the conquerors more efficiently.

Cannon and Cannoneer

Each player has a cannon piece in their supply. To use your cannon, you must first build a foundry. The foundry is depicted on the front of the foundry tiles. It costs 1 lumber and 1 ore to build.

After you have built the foundry, turn the tile over and place your cannon adjacent to one of your knights. Now you have promoted this knight to cannoneer. The cannon and the knight form a “cannoneer” unit and are moved together. The cannon gives the knight 1 additional strength point. For example, a mighty knight with a cannon becomes a cannoneer with a strength of 4.

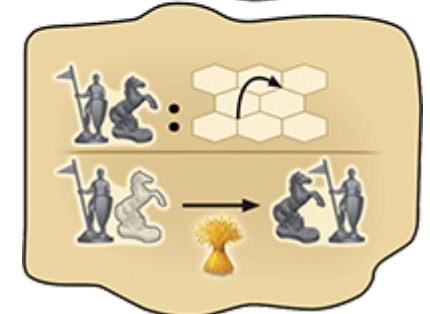
If it gives you a tactical advantage during the game, you may remove the cannon from one of your knights and place it adjacent to another one of your knights, thus promoting that knight to cannoneer. However, this transfer costs you 1 lumber.



Horse and Cavalryman

Each player has 1 horse piece in their supply. To use your horse, you must first build a horse farm. The horse farm is depicted on the front of the horse farm tiles, together with its building costs: 1 lumber and 1 grain.

After you have built the horse farm, turn the tile over and place your horse adjacent to one of your knights. Now you have promoted this knight to cavalry. The horse and the knight form a “cavalry” unit and are moved together. You may move an active cavalry unit to any unoccupied intersection of the game board. This can be very helpful if, for example, you want to break a standoff between a conqueror and the surrounding knights.



After moving your cavalry to an intersection adjacent to one of your roads, you may leave it on that intersection. If none of your roads is adjacent to that intersection, you must immediately return your cavalry to the intersection it came from. As a consequence, deactivating your cavalry and moving him to an intersection not connected to one of your roads only makes sense if it allows you to defeat a conqueror, either alone or together with other players' knights.

Like the cannon, you can also move your horse from one of your knights to another one of your knights. Moving the horse costs 1 grain.

Some strategists may like the idea of equipping a knight with a horse and a cannon, thus making it some kind of overpowering “mounted cannoneer.” However, you are not allowed to place both playing pieces adjacent to a knight. This being said, it’s also hard to imagine a knight on a horse holding a cannon in his arms and firing it in all directions...

Wine Tokens

At the beginning of the game, there are 2, 3, 4, or 5 wine tokens on each hills hex and each fields hex. If you have a city adjacent to a hex with wine tokens, every time the hex’s number is rolled, you receive 1 resource and 1 wine token. For example, if you have a city at a hills hex and the number of this hex is rolled, you receive 1 brick and 1 wine token for your city. The supply of wine tokens on the hexes is not replenished. If the wine tokens on one of these hexes are depleted, you receive either 2 brick or 2 grain for a city adjacent to that hex, as normal.

Amber Tokens

At the beginning of the game, some intersections are occupied by amber tokens. If, at the beginning of the game, you build a settlement on such an intersection, you may take the amber token(s) and place them in front of you as a supply. Further on in the game, you receive the amber token(s) on an intersection if you reach that intersection with one of your roads.

Chapter 2 Tile

In part 4 of this series of blog posts, I already explained the meaning of the event spaces referred to as “The Conquerors Land” (purple flag), “The Conquerors Advance” (sword), and “Attack of the Barbarians” (double ax). The “Support from the South” event spaces (in the picture, they are marked with a blue circle) are new. If the barbarian ship is moved to one of these spaces, depending on the image depicted on the space, each player receives either 1 wine token or 1 amber token.

The “Wyler’s Help” event spaces depicting the back of a battle card are also new. If the barbarian ship is moved to this event space, each player may buy up to 2 battle cards. Battle cards are progress cards; they are placed in a stack next to the other 3 progress card stacks. Each battle card costs 1 wine token and 1 amber token. The more amber you collect and the more wine you harvest, the more battle cards you can buy and then use to defy



the conquerors. Wine tokens and amber tokens only serve to buy battle cards. You may trade them with other players, but unlike resources, you are not allowed to trade them 3:1 for resources from the supply.

Because the game includes an additional progress card type, in chapter 2 and 3 you may collect up to 5 progress cards. Only if you receive a sixth progress card must you discard 1 progress card.

Since the battle cards are progress cards, the rules that apply to the other progress cards of the Cities & Knights expansion also apply to the battle cards. Unless stated otherwise on a battle card, you may only play the card during your own turn. The battle cards in detail:



Chapter 3

Part 1

Introduction

The conquerors encountered stiff resistance when marching toward the largest city in the northeast of Catan. The Catanians benefited from being familiar with the terrain of their homeland and knowing the appropriate places to effectively obstruct the path of the intruders and ambush them at the same time.

Whenever the conquerors were busy removing an obstruction, Catanian archers emerged from a near forest, showered the enemy with arrows, and immediately retreated into the forest.

Dagur and his cavalry pursued the conquerors' squads of hunters and pillagers that secured provisions for their army. Only very few squads returned unscathed to their army.

When the enemy was only a day's march away from the city they intended to conquer, Thora put the plan she had conceived into action. She placed more archers on the city wall and hid with her army behind a forested hill nearby. Thora hoped that the conquerors would regard the occasional attacks of her archers and Dagur's attacks on the squads of pillagers as nothing but the actions of desperate partisans and not suspect a larger army close by.

When the conquerors arrived in front of the city, they first set up a provisional camp. The next morning, they attacked. First they fired their cannons until parts of the city wall began to crumble. When they stormed the partially destroyed city wall, the Catanian archers on the remaining wall sections inflicted considerable losses on them. However, this didn't stop the conquerors. Some of their combatants had already entered the city when Thora finally gave the order to attack.

Almost simultaneously, the cannons provided by Captain Wyler fired at the conquerors' camp, Dagur and his cavalry attacked the enemy from the rear, and Roven's infantry started moving. Following the example of their forebears, the infantrymen had formed up into a shield wall.

The conquerors were bewildered and initially ran around aimlessly. At this point, the wall was no longer the target of the conquerors, and the rain of arrows shot by the archers on the wall killed many of them. Thora's attack left the enemy combatants with no choice but to regroup and square off against the attacking Catanians behind them. The battle for Catan had begun ...

After the Battle

Thora felt deeply exhausted. Tired, she took off her helmet. Dagur stopped his horse next to hers and grasped her hand.

“We have won, Thora! Those dirty dogs have retreated and are licking their wounds.”

Dagur looked expectantly into his wife’s eyes. Astonished, he noticed that her eyes were not joyful but looked at him with sadness. Dagur didn’t understand.

“Thora, don’t you hear me, we have decided the battle in our favor! That mainly happened thanks to you. During the battle, our Catanian flag, which you carried, undulated at many different places but was always present. You encouraged our men and women to surpass themselves and defend their freedom. Aren’t you happy about our victory?”

Thora’s voice sounded tired. “Yes, we won, Dagur. But at what price? Many, far too many Catanians met their death. I saw so many of us die. Roven, who together with selected, brave men defended me on the battlefield, also died when he jumped in front of a lance thrust that was meant for me.”

Dagur understood. He pressed Thora’s hand. “Thora, every Catanian knew that they could lose their life during this battle. Most of them preferred death to the fate of being slaves for the rest of their lives, of being taken to a foreign country, far away from their homeland, from their loved ones, whose future was also uncertain.”

“You are probably right, Dagur. But did we allow each Catanian to choose their fate?”

Thora spurred her horse and rode to the field hospital, where Lea and her group of healers were taking care of the many wounded. Thora dismounted and approached Lea, who was skillfully bandaging a woman whose sword arm had been severely injured.

“I am so sorry about Roven, Lea.” Lea’s eyes were swollen from crying. Filled with grief, she gave Thora a blank look and nodded briefly, without interrupting her work.

Dagur had ridden behind Thora and dismounted next to her. For a while, they stood silently side by side. “Thora, we must not hesitate now. As soon as possible, we should go after the intruders who got away and drive them into the sea where they came from.”

“Our fighters are exhausted, Dagur. Many of them are injured. The enemies who took flight – and they are many – will retreat to the stockade forts they hastily built everywhere in the North. We do not have enough fighters to chase them away from there. No, for now we must hold the still-unoccupied ground and protect people from the pillages committed by the conquerors. I will ride to the South and recruit new fighters. You will be the commander-in-chief here until I come back with the new fighters.”



Part 2

Captain Wyler's Secret

Four weeks later, Captain Wyler once again steered his ships into the harbor. The caravels, full to the brim with more weapons, armor, and cannons, lay low in the water. He also brought another seven caravels to reinforce the Catanian fleet and turned them over to Aegis, the commander of the fleet, who was visibly delighted.

Thora greeted the captain. Her eyes rested on the seven new caravels anchoring in the harbor. "It seems that your king was very satisfied with our last amber and wine shipment."

"Indeed, esteemed Thora. Besides that, he was overjoyed that you have stopped the conquerors' advance. Regard the seven ships as a gift from the king, to pay tribute and respect to you and the valiant Catanians."

"Please pass my thanks on to your king. I presume, though, that his extremely generous gift wasn't entirely unselfish, was it?"

Captain Wyler smiled. "Oh, you already seem to know my king quite well."

Wyler's expression became serious. "Your enemy is equipping new troops. They are supposed to unite with their compatriots who have barricaded themselves inside their forts in the north of your island. Your enemy still intends to conquer your entire island. If you don't succeed in destroying your enemy's forts before the new troops arrive, you'll hardly have a chance to preserve your independence. If the troops unite, you will be in a hopelessly inferior position. Then the weapons and armor we provided you with won't help you either."

"How much time do we have left?"

"Our spies are reporting that your enemy's fleet will leave in about four weeks."

Thora was thinking. She would have to shorten the training of the new recruits. In a week's time at the latest, she would have to take them to the North, to destroy – in conjunction with the army under Dagur's command – the conquerors' forts.

Captain Wyler coughed slightly and interrupted Thora's thoughts. "Dear Thora, your situation is serious, despite your victory. I esteem you, so I will tell you a secret now. My king's notion of his biggest competitor in the Old World potentially conquering your beautiful island and incorporating it into his kingdom causes him sleepless nights. As I already mentioned, your island is an important strategic stopover on the voyage to the bountiful countries of the New World in the West. I am convinced that my king would have tried to conquer your island hadn't his competitor preempted him. Consequently, he

secretly supports you against your enemy because he can't risk open war with him. Now you surely understand the reason behind his generous gift. Use your fleet – now not so insignificant anymore – wisely. You shouldn't use it openly against your enemy. I advise you to wait until the enemy fleet has landed on the north shore and the major part of the crews has disembarked. Then it should be easy for your sister Aegis to capture your enemy's ships."

"I thank you for your trust, Captain Wyler. We will make good use of your king's gift."

Two weeks later, Thora returned to Dagur with optimally equipped troops. The assault on the enemy forts began.

The picture shows the north of Catan before the set-up phase. First, each player builds a settlement on one of the intersections marked with a settlement marker (blue circle) and places a road adjacent to it. Then build your second settlement in the south, below the red line and also place a road adjacent to it. Afterwards, each of you converts one of their settlements into a city.



The rules for collecting the amber tokens and wine tokens on the board are the same as in Chapter 2 and you can purchase 1 “battle” progress card by paying 1 wine and 1 amber, just as in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 3, for the most part, the original Cities & Knights rules apply again, meaning:

- You play with the original Cities & Knights politics cards
- You may build metropolises
- The robber is used
- You start the game with 1 settlement and 1 city

In Chapter 2, you defeated the conquerors and prevented them from advancing. Your enemies have retreated to their forts in the north of Catan and are awaiting reinforcements.

Your task is to conquer the forts before the conqueror reinforcements arrive.

The reinforcements arrive as soon as the barbarian ship on the Chapter 3 Tile is moved to an event space depicting red dice and one of those dice shows the same result as the red die of the production roll. At the latest, the reinforcements arrive when the barbarian ship is moved to the last event space.

What matters now is the total number of forts all of you combined have conquered.

If 3 or more forts (in a 3-player game) or 4 or more forts (in a 4-player game) remain on the game board, you all have lost the battle against the conquerors.

If fewer forts remain on the board, the players with the most victory points wins the game. In case of a tie, the number of victory points reached on the hero track determines the winner.

The game ends early if one player reaches 18 victory points and thus wins the game.

The event space depicting 6 swords (shown on the Chapter 3 Tile) stands for a charge of the conquerors from their forts.

In my next blog post, I’ll explain the consequences of a charge and how you can conquer the forts.



The rules for the battle against the conquerors differ from the rules described in the two preceding chapters. You do not move the conquerors across the game board – they stay in their forts. To conquer the forts, you must besiege them.

First, you move your units (knights, cannoneers, and cavalymen) to an unoccupied intersection at a hex with a fort. Of course, your knights and cannoneers must move along your roads. Unlike in Chapters 1 and 2, a battle doesn't necessarily ensue yet when you move a unit to such an intersection. A battle takes place only in two cases:

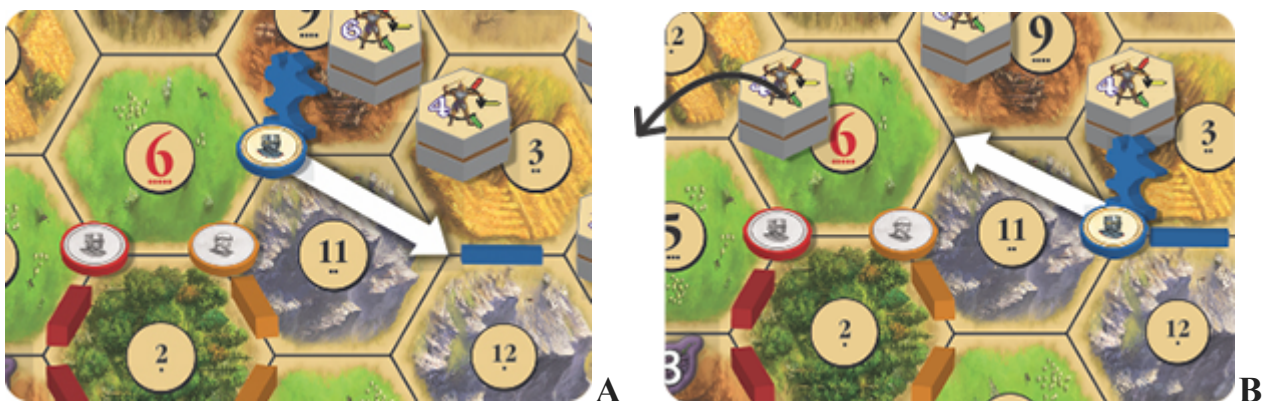
1. Conquering a Fort:

If one or more of your units occupy intersections at a hex with a fort and the strength of this unit or the combined strength of these units surpasses the conqueror's strength, you conquer the fort. Your units do not have to be active to conquer a fort.

Example:

A. The conqueror in the fort has a strength of 4. 2 units of Red and Orange besiege him; the combined strength is 3. It is Blue's turn. Their cavalry has a strength of 2; they move it to the besieged hex.

B. The knights have a total strength of "5" and defeat the conqueror. The fort is captured and the conqueror is removed. Blue must return their cavalr to its starting intersection.



After conquering a fort, perform the following actions in successive order:

1. If your cavalry participated in the capture and doesn't occupy an intersection adjacent to one of your roads, you must return the cavalry to its starting intersection.
2. Each player who participated with one or more of their knights in the capture of the fort moves their marker upward 1 space on the hero track.
3. Each player who participated with at least one of their knights in the capture of the fort receives the reward depicted on the fort's bottom side (wine, amber, or a road for free).

The active player takes their reward first; the other players follow in clockwise order. Afterwards, remove the fort and the associated conqueror and put them back into the box.

2. Charge of the Conquerors

If the barbarian ship is moved to a “Charge of the Conquerors” event space, the conquerors (symbolized by the conqueror piece in the fort) make a charge from their forts. When this occurs, remove all of the knights adjacent to a terrain hex with a fort.

In Chapter 3, you can initially safely move a unit to an intersection at a terrain hex with a fort, even if the unit (alone or together with other units) is weaker than or equally strong as the conqueror in the fort. However, if the barbarian ship is moved to a “Charge of the Conquerors” space, you lose all of your units on intersections at a hex with a fort. To prevent a large loss, if a charge is impending, you should either send sufficiently strong units to a fort so as to capture it, or arrange with another player that they will send reinforcements on a subsequent turn.

Epilogue

Thora and Dagur succeeded in destroying all of the conquerors' forts in time. A prolonged drought, which had parched the stockades and made them very vulnerable to the Catanian's flaming arrows, came to the islander's aid, and the cannons took care of the rest.



When the reinforcing conquerors arrived and penetrated into the interior of the island, they searched in vain for their comrades in arms, who they wanted to join to form a large army.

Dagur set a trap for the conquerors, which resulted in the death of many enemy combatants. Afterwards, the conquerors regrouped and barricaded themselves in a destroyed fort that still had some intact stockades. There, a messenger brought them the news that the Catanian caravels – which the conquerors didn't yet know existed – had succeeded in capturing their ships. Realizing that the retreat to their home country was cut off, the conquerors, who mostly were mercenaries without much moral commitment to their king, surrendered.

Aegis provided ships to put the mercenaries ashore close to their home country. Thora gave the leader of the mercenaries a message for his king. It contained an offer of a peace treaty. Upon signing the peace treaty, Catan would allow the king's ships sailing to the New World to enter Catanian harbors to replenish their supplies or seek shelter from approaching storms. The king, who probably had his hands full in the countries of the New World in the West, signed the peace treaty.

The enemy combatants the Catanians had driven out of their forts were sentenced to three years of penal labor. Together with the Catanians, they rebuilt the cities and settlements they had destroyed. During this period, many of the foreigners established a friendly relationship with the Catanians. Therefore, after serving their sentence, most of the former enemies stayed on Catan and created a new life for themselves. Once they had served their sentence, the Catanians welcomed them as if they were their own.

Invoking Thora's permission, the king of Captain Wyler's powerful home country built an outpost on the south coast of Catan, which in the following years grew into a large harbor. In return, the king took Catan – which remained independent and free – under his protection.

After peace was restored, the Council of Catan revoked Thora's titles of Temporary Ruler and Commander-in-Chief of the Catanian Armed Forces, as provided for in the constitution. A little later, Thora also gave up her position as President of the Council and retreated with her husband Dagur to their country estate in the heart of Catan.

At some point, the healer Lea vanquished her grief over the death of Roven, her husband. She became a respected medical teacher at the University of Catan.

Here ends the story of Catan as we experience it when playing the base game and its expansions. If Catan weren't fictitious, but a real island in the region of the Azores, in the middle of the Atlantic, comparable in size to Ireland, one could ask which role Catan would play in today's global community. I leave the answer to this question to your imagination, dear readers.

