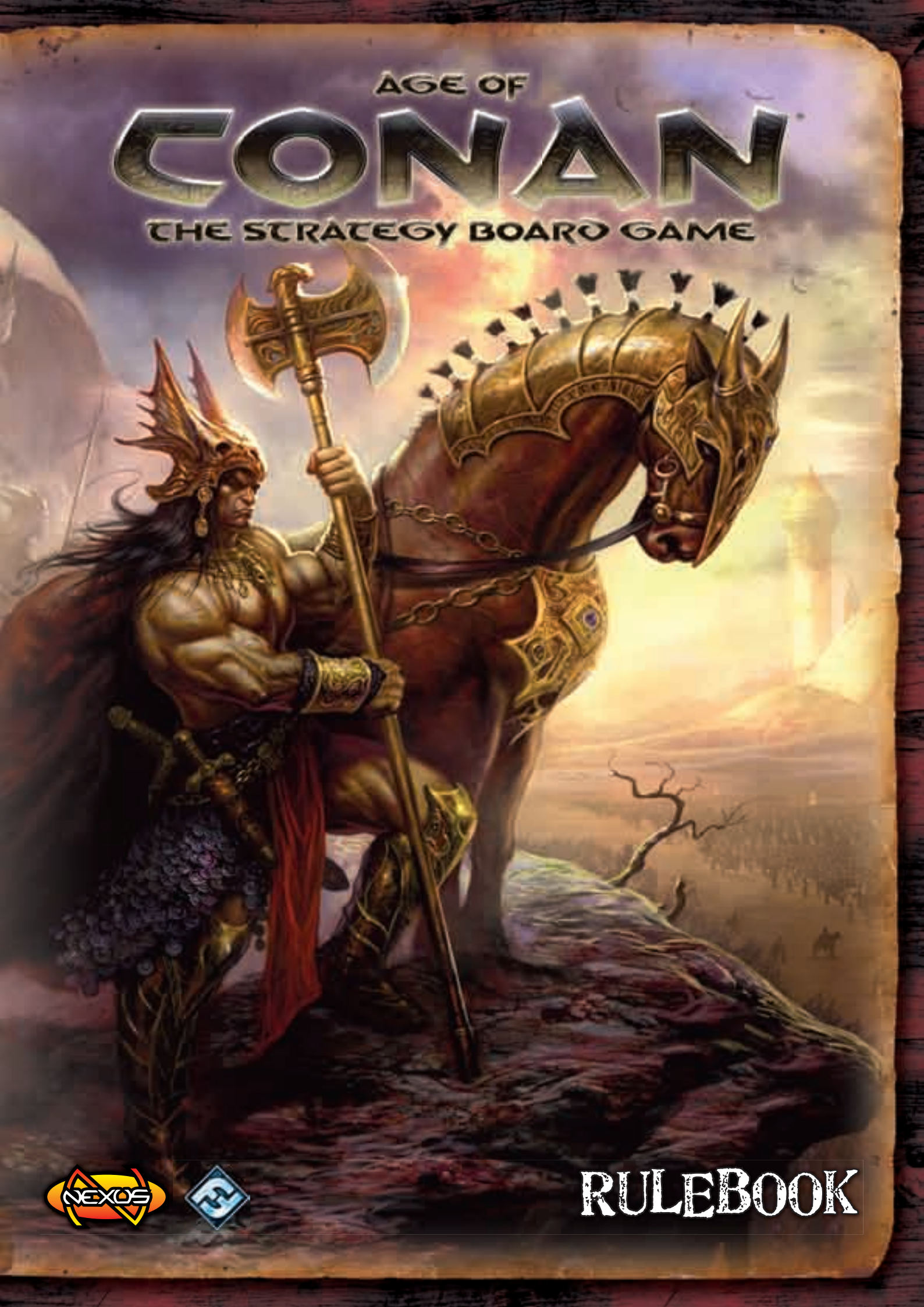
# AGE OF CONAN

## THE STRATEGY BOARD GAME



RULEBOOK

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AGE OF CONAN
THE STRATEGY BOARD GAME

**A game by Roberto Di Meglio, Marco Maggi, and Francesco Nepitello**

*This is an age of strife and sorcery. An age of might, splendor, and decadence.*

*The kingdoms of the Hyborians dominate the western world. The most powerful is Aquilonia, but others rival its military might. These kingdoms reign supreme in the western world, though the barbarians of the wastelands are growing in strength.*

*Far to the south sleeps sorcerous Stygia, untouched by foreign invasion. Its dusky masters have been driven south of the great river Styx, and now they meddle in sorcery and intrigue, trying to bring back their ancient power.*

*Into the north, golden-haired, blue-eyed barbarians, descendants of the blond arctic savages, have driven the remaining Hyborian tribes out of the snow countries. Only the ancient kingdom of Hyperborea resists their onslaught. Its misty and chilly cities hold mystical secrets that the barbarians around them can hardly understand.*

*Through the centuries, the Hyrkanians have pushed steadily westward. Now a tribe skirts the southern end of the great inland sea – Vilayet – and has established the kingdom of Turan on the southwestern shore.*

*Into this age of empire building, heroic achievements, and vile misdeeds steps Conan the Cimmerian. Black-haired, sullen-eyed, and sword in hand, he is a thief, a reaver, a slayer, with deep melancholies and broad mirth. All tremble at his approach, for he comes to tread the jeweled thrones of the earth under his sandaled feet.*

*The Age of Conan is coming...*

# WELCOME

*Welcome to the world of Conan, the barbarian hero created by Robert E. Howard.* Age of Conan *is a strategy board game that lets each player control one of the four major kingdoms of the Hyborian Age.*

*Players fight with armies, sorcery, and intrigue to conquer their enemies and make their kingdoms the most powerful in the world. However, only one will win the allegiance of the mightiest hero of all – Conan the Cimmerian!*

# OBJECT OF THE GAME

In *Age of Conan*, up to four players compete to build the most powerful Hyborian empire, using military power and political alliances to win over neutral provinces and subjugate the lands of their opponents. The strength of a player's empire is determined by the empire points he accumulates by subjugating provinces and fulfilling in-game objectives. At the end of the game the player with the most empire points is the winner.

# GAME OVERVIEW

In *Age of Conan*, the four major kingdoms of the Hyborian Age are aggressively expanding their borders and influence, competing to become the most powerful kingdom of the age. Using armies and emissaries, wars and diplomatic intrigue, each kingdom attempts to achieve dominion over its neighbors.

Meanwhile, Conan the Cimmerian, the famous barbarian hero, wanders through western Hyboria. His very presence can disrupt carefully laid plots and turn the tide of battles, and no kingdom can truly control his actions. However, a canny ruler will guide Conan so that his presence confounds the actions of opposing kingdoms, rather than his own.

Eventually, after Conan has undertaken many adventures and the four major Hyborian kingdoms have conquered huge swaths of western Hyboria, the game ends. The most powerful kingdom wins and will dominate the world for ages to come. However, Conan still has one last role to play. A kingdom may try to crown Conan as its king, and if successful, such a kingdom has a good chance of overcoming its rivals. Be warned, though, Conan is savage and unpredictable, and the price for attempting to crown him and failing is steep!

# COMPONENTS

Inside your *Age of Conan* box, you will find the following components:

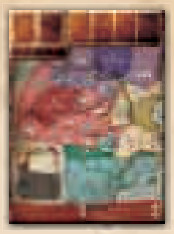
- This Rulebook
- 1 Game Board
- 2 Punchboards of cardboard counters and tokens, containing:
    - 11 Raider Tokens
    - 56 Adventure Tokens
    - 20 Bidding Tokens
    - 32 Gold Tokens
    - 14 Sorcery Tokens
    - 14 "Crom, count the dead!" Tokens
    - 4 Empire Point Counters
    - 1 First Player Token
- 7 Fate Dice
- 6 Contest Dice
- 168 Plastic figures in 4 sets. Each set includes:
    - 18 Army Units
    - 6 Emissaries
    - 9 Towers
    - 9 Forts
- 1 Conan Figure
- 1 Conan Destination Marker
- 165 Playing Cards
    - 27 Adventure Cards
    - 12 Objective Cards
    - 37 Strategy Cards
    - 84 Kingdom Cards (21 for each kingdom)
    - 3 Artifact Cards
    - 1 Conan Bonus Card
    - 1 Conan Player Card
- 4 Reference Sheets

Before playing your first game of *Age of Conan*, separate all cards into their individual decks and carefully punch out the cardboard pieces so they do not tear. Separate the plastic components by color. Be sure to keep all components out of the reach of small children and animals.



# GAME COMPONENTS

### Game Board
The game board depicts the Hyborian kingdoms and the lands surrounding them. Over the course of the game, players attempt to conquer these territories through military might and political maneuvering.



### "Crom, count the dead!" Tokens
Players receive these tokens when they win battles against other players. The player who collects the most "Crom, count the dead!" tokens receives a bonus at the end of the game.



### Raider Tokens
These tokens are used to represent the disruption caused by Conan raiding and plundering in a province.



### Empire Points Counters
Players use these to keep track of how many empire points they have accumulated on the empire points track.



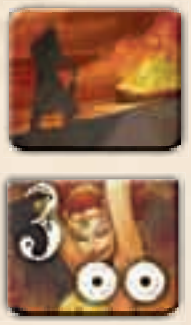

### Bidding Tokens
Players use these to bid for control of Conan at the beginning of an adventure.




### First Player Token
This token is used to keep track of the player who takes the first turn when beginning a new age.



### Adventure Tokens
Adventure tokens are used to represent the monsters Conan fights, the women he meets, and the treasures he claims during his adventures. Players collect these during the course of the game and use them to accomplish various goals and claim legendary artifacts.




### Fate Dice
Players roll these seven dice to determine the actions they can take during the game. Each die has a series of symbols, and each symbol corresponds to an action a player may take on his turn.



### Contest Dice
Players roll these six dice to resolve contests during the game.



### Gold Tokens
Gold tokens are used to represent the gold players accumulate during the game.




### Army Figures
These detailed plastic pieces represent the armies of the four Hyborian kingdoms.



### Sorcery Tokens
Sorcery tokens are used to represent the sorcerous powers players have at their disposal during the game.




### Emissary Figures
These detailed plastic pieces represent the diplomatic envoys of the four Hyborian kingdoms.



## Fort and Tower Control Markers

Players use the fort and tower control markers to indicate which provinces on the board they have taken control of through military or diplomatic means.



## Conan Figure

This figure is used to mark the current location of Conan on the game board.



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## Conan Destination Marker

This marker is used to mark Conan's destination on the game board during his adventures.



## Adventure Cards

These cards represent Conan's adventures throughout the Hyborian kingdoms. Conan's adventures dictate how long the game lasts and affect the players in other ways as well.




## Objective Cards

These cards represent the political and military goals of the Hyborian kingdoms. Each card provides an objective and an empire points bonus to the player or players who achieve it.




## Strategy Cards

These cards may be used by players to modify their rolls in military or intrigue contests, and are also used by players when they bid to control Conan during an adventure.




## Kingdom Cards

Each Hyborian kingdom has its own specific deck of cards. These represent the special characters, military units, events, and mystical powers at the kingdom's disposal.




## Artifact Cards

These cards represent three powerful relics awarded to players during the game, granting them powerful bonuses.



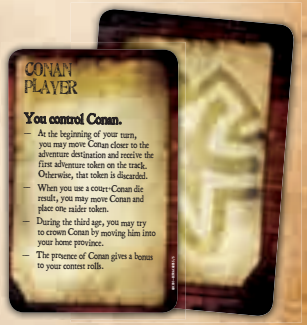

## Conan Bonus Card

During the game, this card is awarded to the player with the lowest score, providing him with a bonus ability.




## Conan Player Card

This card is given to the player who controls Conan during one of his adventures, and lists the special abilities this role entails.



# THE BOARD

This diagram of the game board identifies its various parts, and shows where many of the components are placed during setup.

1. **Adventure Deck**
2. **Current Adventure**
3. **Adventure Track**
4. **Objectives in Play**
5. **Fate Dice Pool**
6. **Strategy Deck**
7. **Empire Points Track**




## IMPORTANT TERMS

These are several important terms involving the setup and gameplay on the game board.

- A **kingdom** is the starting province of a player. There are four kingdoms in *Age of Conan*: **Aquilonia**, **Stygia**, **Turan**, and **Hyperborea**. A kingdom is also referred to as a "home province."
- A **friendly** province is any neutral province that a player conquers or makes an alliance with. A player's home province is also always considered to be friendly.
- An **enemy** province is any province that is friendly to another player.
- A **neutral** province is any province that is neither friendly, nor enemy.
- A **savage** province is indicated by the crossed bones beneath its province rating, and represents a barbaric region that can only be conquered by a player. Players may never form alliances with savage provinces.
- A **coastal** province is a province that shares a border with the Western Sea or the Vilayet Sea.

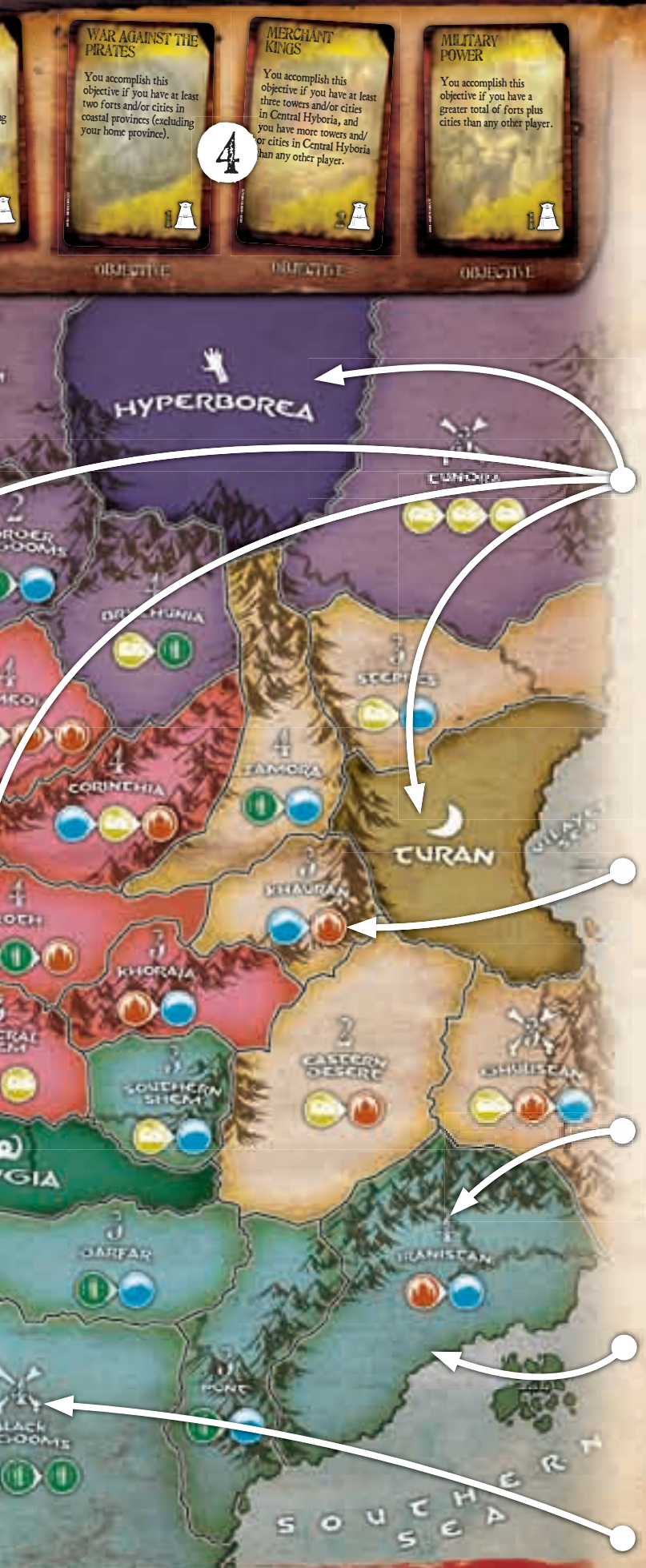
There are also three different types of **control markers** that are placed on provinces during the game.

- A player places a **fort** on a province he has conquered through a military contest.
- A player places a **tower** on a province he has allied with through an intrigue contest.
- In the course of a game, a player may build a **city** on a friendly province. This is indicated by placing a fort marker in a friendly province, then placing a tower marker on top of the fort marker.

For more information on military and intrigue contests, see page 15. For more information on building cities, see page 19.

### Note

A player never places a control marker of any type on his home province.

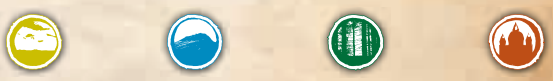



The main portion of the board is a **map of the Hyborian kingdoms.** The map is divided into four main areas. Each area is further divided into a number of territories called **provinces**.

- The North is composed of the purple provinces surrounding Hyperboria.
- The East is composed of the yellow provinces surrounding Turan.
- The South is composed of the green provinces surrounding Stygia.
- Central Hyboria is composed of the red provinces surrounding Aquilonia.

The four kingdoms are marked with special symbols. They lack campaign tracks and province ratings (which other provinces have – see below).

Each province that is not a kingdom contains a chain of symbols referred to as a **campaign track**. Each symbol depicts a certain terrain type. Campaign tracks are used in certain types of military contests.



Plains Hills Woods Urban

Each province has a numerical value, a **province rating**. This represents the province's resistance to intrigue and its military strength. This rating is also used to determine how much gold and how many empire points a province is worth.

If a province borders a sea, it is considered **coastal**.

If the crossed bones icon appears behind the province rating, the province is a **savage** province.

# STARTING THE GAME

## 1. Set Up Kingdoms

Each player chooses one kingdom he will control during the game. The players may mutually agree on which kingdoms they will play, or they may choose randomly.

After players have decided which kingdoms they will play, each player takes his kingdom cards, bidding tokens, and plastic figures. Each kingdom card is labeled with the name of the kingdom it is used with, and each player should take all of his kingdom's cards, shuffle them into a deck, and place them facedown in front of himself.

The plastic figures are colored by kingdom: the figures for Aquilonia are red, the figures for Turan are yellow, the figures for Stygia are green and the figures for Hyperborea are purple. Each player should take his kingdom's plastic figures, and place them in a reserve pile next to his kingdom deck. Each kingdom also has a set of bidding tokens in its color. Each player should take his kingdom's bidding tokens, and set them next to his reserve pile.

Each player then receives three gold. Stygia and Hyperborea also receive two sorcery. Then, each player places his starting army units on the board, in his kingdom. Aquilonia and Turan each receive five army units and four emissaries as starting units, while Stygia and Hyperborea receive four army units and four emissaries as starting units.

## Gold and Sorcery Tokens

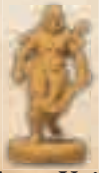
The gold and sorcery players collect during the game are represented by tokens. Each token has a number on the back indicating its **value**, or how much gold or sorcery the token is worth. For example, a gold token with a "5" on the back is worth five gold.

When a player receives gold or sorcery, he takes a number of gold or sorcery tokens from the communal pool with a combined value equal to the amount of gold or sorcery he is instructed to receive. A player may exchange his low-value gold or sorcery tokens for high-value gold or sorcery tokens at any time, provided that the combined value of the tokens the player returns to the pool equals the combined value of the tokens the player receives in return.

Likewise, when a player is required to spend gold or sorcery, he may exchange high value tokens for an equal value in low value tokens in order to spend the exact amount of gold or sorcery required. Spent gold and sorcery tokens are returned to the appropriate communal pool.

Any time a player is supposed to receive one of these resources and there is an insufficient amount of tokens in the communal pool, then the player takes what is available and keeps track of the rest by making a tally on a sheet of paper.

If there is a sufficient quantity of tokens remaining, but a player cannot make the "correct change," another player should exchange tokens of different values with the tokens in the pool to solve the problem.

| AQUILONIA | TURAN | STYGIA | HYPERBOREA |
|---|---|---|---|
|  Symbol |  Symbol |  Symbol |  Symbol |
|  Emissary |  Emissary |  Emissary |  Emissary |
|  Army Unit |  Army Unit |  Army Unit |  Army Unit |

## 2. Draw Objectives

Shuffle all objective cards into an objective deck. Then draw a number of cards from the deck equal to the number of players (for example, three cards in a three-player game) and put them faceup on the appropriate spaces on the board (see the board setup diagram on pages 6–7). These are the current objectives that are in play.

## 3. Draw Strategy Cards

Shuffle all strategy cards into a deck, and place the deck within reach of all players. Each player then draws two cards from his kingdom deck and two cards from the common strategy deck. These form each player's hand of cards, and each player keeps his cards secret from the other players.

## 4. Set up Conan and the Adventure Deck

Place the Conan figure in the province of Cimmeria on the game board. Then shuffle all of the adventure cards into a pile. Draw four random cards to form the adventure deck for the current age and place them facedown on the appropriate space on the board. Then, reveal the top card of the four and place it on the space of the board reserved for the current adventure (see the board setup diagram on pages 6–7). Finally, place the Conan destination marker in the province indicated by the adventure card.

The remainder of the adventure cards are set aside until a new adventure deck is needed later in the game.

Place the adventure tokens in an opaque container, such as a cup or bag. Then, randomly draw a number of adventure tokens from the container equal to the number indicated by the current adventure card. These tokens are placed faceup (so the value and token type are visible) in a single row from left to right, starting with the first token drawn. This line of tokens is called the **adventure track**.

### Adventure Cards

These cards represent the adventures of Conan. Each adventure has a title, flavor text, length (indicating how many adventure tokens are used to form the adventure track), and a destination (the province that Conan must reach to successfully complete the adventure).




1. Card title.
2. The destination is the province Conan must reach to complete the adventure.
3. The flavor text gives a short summary of the adventure.
4. The length indicates the number of adventure tokens drawn for the adventure.

## 5. Assign Artifacts and Conan Bonus Card

Shuffle the three artifact cards – the Sword of Atlantis, Cobra Crown, and the Heart of Tammuz – and the Conan bonus card and place them facedown on the board. Each player randomly draws one card, meaning three players start the game with artifact cards, and one player starts the game with the Conan bonus card. (Rules for playing games with less than four players can be found on page 22.)

Each of the three artifact cards provides the player who possesses it with a powerful bonus. This bonus is described on the card.

## 6. Bid for Conan

At this point, before the first turn begins, all players participate in a round of bidding (the bid phase) to determine which player becomes the Conan player during the current adventure.

First, each player draws one card from the strategy deck and adds it to his hand. Then, each player chooses one strategy card from his hand and places it facedown in front of him. Finally, each player selects one of his bidding tokens and places it, facedown, on top of his strategy card.

When all players have played a strategy card and a bidding token, all cards and tokens are revealed. Each player adds the number on his bidding token to the adventure rating on his strategy card (see page 14). The player with the highest result becomes the Conan player and receives the Conan player card. All strategy cards used in the bidding process are discarded, and all bidding tokens used are set aside.

In case of a tie, the role of the Conan player is assigned to the player with the lowest number of adventure tokens in his possession. If the tied players possess the same number of adventure tokens, the role of the Conan player goes to the player whose kingdom is closest to the Conan figure (determining the distance between Conan and a province is explained in "The Conan Player Turn" on page 10).

Further ties are resolved randomly.

The tokens that the players bid with and then set aside will remain set aside through future bids for Conan during game play, with certain exceptions (see "Bid Tokens" on page 18).

The Conan bonus card allows a player to play a second strategy card to replace his first card during the bid phase, after every players' cards and tokens are revealed. If a player does this, he discards both cards at the end of the bidding phase.

EXAMPLE: *In the first bid, Aquilonia uses his "3" token, and a strategy card with an adventure rating of 2. Turan uses his "5" token and a strategy card with a rating of 3. Aquilonia has a total of five and Turan has a total of eight, so Turan wins the bid and becomes the current Conan player.*

Once the bidding process is over, the Conan player takes the first turn.

# GAMEPLAY

*Age of Conan* is played over the course of three **ages.** Each age consists of four of Conan's adventures.

During his turn, a player may have the opportunity to remove adventure tokens from the adventure track and to move the Conan figure to different locations on the board. When all of the adventure tokens on the adventure track are removed, the adventure ends. Players then resolve the old adventure, draw a new adventure from the adventure deck, and continue playing (see "Conan's Adventures" on page 17).

Once all four adventures in the adventure deck are resolved, the age ends. Players participate in a series of activities known as the **age change phase** (see page 18), create a new adventure deck, and begin the next age.

At the end of the third age, or if a player attempts to crown Conan as his kingdom's ruler, the game ends and players determine who the winner is.

## TURNS AND FATE DICE

Each adventure is broken up into a varying number of player turns. At the start of the game, the Conan player takes the first turn, followed by the player to his left, and so on around the table. If gameplay is ever interrupted due to the end of an adventure or an age change phase, the player who would take the next turn takes the first player token. Once gameplay resumes, the player with the first player token takes the first turn and gameplay continues as normal.

A player's turn usually consists of two steps:

### 1) Play and Refresh Play-on-the-table Cards

Certain kingdom cards, referred to as **play-on-the-table cards**, may only be played or refreshed at the beginning of a player's turn. At the beginning of his turn, a player may play and refresh as many of these cards as he is able.

More information about play-on-the-table and other kingdom cards can be found on page 22.

### 2) Use a Fate Die

The player chooses one fate die from the fate dice pool and performs the action shown on the fate die he selects (see "The Fate Dice Pool" next).

## The Fate Dice Pool

In *Age of Conan*, which actions a player may take during his turn are determined by the roll of the seven fate dice. Each side of each fate die has a symbol representing an action a player may take during his turn (see "Fate Dice Actions" on the following page).

At the start of the game, the Conan player rolls all seven fate dice. The dice are then placed in the fate dice pool section of the board, without altering their results (see the game board setup diagram on pages 6–7). Then, starting with the Conan player and proceeding clockwise, the players take their turns.

During a player's turn, he must choose one fate die and perform the action shown on that die. The die is then removed from the fate dice pool and may not be used by the other players. Each player only chooses one fate die during his turn.

When the fate dice pool is empty, the player whose turn is next rerolls all seven dice, places them in the pool as before, chooses one of them, and performs the corresponding action. This process continues throughout the game. If gameplay is interrupted due to the ending of an adventure or an age change phase, leave any unused fate dice in the pool. Once gameplay resumes, these dice must be used before the fate dice are rerolled.

## The Conan Player Turn

The Conan player has the opportunity to control Conan, so his turn has one additional step. At the very beginning of his turn, the Conan player may move the Conan figure (referred to as "Conan") to any province adjacent to the province it currently occupies. This is in addition to any fate dice actions the Conan player takes during his turn.

If the movement decreases the distance between Conan and the destination marker (measured by how many provinces are between the province Conan occupies and the province the destination marker occupies), then the Conan player takes the leftmost adventure token off the adventure track, and keeps it, facedown, in front of him. A player may look at his own adventure tokens, but other players may not.

If the movement does not shorten the distance, or if the Conan player chooses not to move Conan, the first adventure token is discarded.

If Conan is already occupying the province containing the destination marker, then the Conan player takes the adventure token if he does not move Conan.

EXAMPLE: *The current adventure is The Frost Giant's Daughter, which has Nordheim as the destination. Conan is currently in Aquilonia. If the Conan player moves Conan to the Pictish Wilderness, Cimmeria, or to the Border Kingdoms, he receives the first adventure token. If he decides to move Conan elsewhere (or to leave him in Aquilonia), he returns the token to the token container.*

# FATE DICE ACTIONS

There are five icons on a fate die (one icon appears twice). These icons are **court+Conan**, **military**, **intrigue**, **military/intrigue**, and **wild**. Each icon represents an action, and a player may take that action by selecting an appropriate fate die, assuming that one (a) rolled that result, and (b) is still available.

Each action has several options listed beneath it. Except in rare cases, a player may only choose one of these options each time he takes an action. The most notable exception to this rule is when a player chooses the court+Conan action. When he does this, he must perform the Conan action first, then select a court action option to perform.

## Court + Conan

## Conan

The Conan option varies depending on whether the player who selects the action is the Conan player or not.

**- Conan Player:** The Conan player may choose to move Conan to an adjacent province. He may also choose to place a **raider token** in the province occupied by Conan or in an adjacent province, before or after moving Conan. (Raider tokens are explained on page 19). This movement is in addition to the Conan player's moving Conan at the beginning of his turn. The Conan player does not take an adventure token, however, when using the court+Conan die to move Conan.

**- Non-Conan Player:** Before taking a court action, the non-Conan player takes the leftmost adventure token from the adventure track. He keeps it, facedown, in front of himself.

## Court

A player must select one of the following to perform a court action:

- The player draws one card from his kingdom deck and one card from the strategy deck.

- The player draws two cards from the strategy deck.

- Certain kingdom cards known as **event cards** require a court action to play. A player may play one such event card from his hand as his court action, instead of drawing cards.

## Military

A player must select one of the following to perform a military action:

- The player may move up to two armies to adjacent, friendly provinces. Army movement is described in the sidebar on the next page.

- The player may move one army to an adjacent, friendly province, and then **attack** with any friendly army. Players attack by moving an army located in a province into one adjacent neutral or adjacent enemy province and starting a military contest there, or by not moving an army and starting a military contest in a province already containing a friendly army on campaign. Military contests are described on page 15.

- The player may place an army unit in up to two different friendly provinces from his reserve pile, as long as he has less than 18 units in play.

**Note:** All army units present in a single province are collectively called an **army**.



EXAMPLE: *During a previous turn, Aquilonia started a campaign in Argos, and now has a three-unit army on the second step of the campaign track of Argos. He also has a two-unit army in Aquilonia, and a four-unit army in Ophir, which he already subjugated. With a military action, he could rearrange his troops in different ways to continue his campaign to subjugate Argos: (See "Military Contests" on page 15 for more information on these actions.)*

I *He may move one of the units in the two-unit army in Aquilonia to friendly Ophir, to create a five-unit army there; then he could start a contest in Argos with the army there;*

II *He may move three of the units in the Ophir army to Aquilonia, creating a five-unit army there. He may then move two of the units of the army in Aquilonia to Argos, to join the army there, creating a campaigning five-unit army. This move would count as an attack, not a redeployment, because Argos is not friendly. He may then continue the campaign in Argos.*

III *He may choose not to move his armies, and simply attack Argos by moving the two-unit army in Aquilonia to Argos (creating a five-unit army there), and then continuing the campaign to subjugate this province.*

## Army Movement

A player may never have more than five army units in a single province. If this occurs for any reason, he must immediately remove the extra units.

A player moves armies by selecting a province containing one or more of his army units. The player then moves any number of those units (now grouped together and considered an "army") into any adjacent province.

If the province the army entered is a friendly province, then the army's movement ends. If it is an enemy or neutral province, the army's movement ends and the appropriate military contest immediately takes place. Moving into a neutral or enemy province is considered an attack. More information on military contests can be found on page 15.

Exception: Army units may never enter another player's home province.

Exception: A player may have more than five army units in his kingdom (home province).

## Intrigue

A player must select one of the following to perform an intrigue action:

- The player may move up to two of his emissaries. Emissary movement is described in the sidebar below.

- The player may move one of his emissaries. Then, he may start one intrigue contest in a neutral or enemy province containing one of his emissaries. Intrigue Contests are described on page 17.

- The player may move one of his emissaries. Then, he collects gold in an enemy province containing one of his emissaries. To do so, the player removes the emissary from the board and receives gold from the communal gold pool equal to the rating of the province the emissary occupied.

## Emissary Movement

A player moves an emissary by selecting one of his own emissary figures currently on the game board. The emissary may move to any adjacent province. If the province is a friendly province or a province that contains another of that player's emissaries, the player may move his emissary again, into another adjacent province. If these conditions are not met, the emissary stops moving and remains in the province it just entered. An emissary may never enter another player's home province.

Emissaries are moved one at a time, so it is possible for players to create a 'bridge' of emissaries to get an emissary into a particular province.

Note: An unlimited number of emissaries may occupy a province.

- The player places an emissary from his reserve pile on any friendly province on the board. He may only do this if he has less than six emissaries in play.

## Military/Intrigue

When a player selects a military/intrigue die, he must choose whether he wants to perform a military or intrigue action. He then selects one of the options available for the action he selected, as if he had selected a military die or an intrigue die.

A player may never use a military/intrigue die to perform a military action if a military die is available in the fate dice pool. Likewise, he cannot use it to perform an intrigue action if an intrigue die is available.

## Wild

When a player selects a wild die, he must choose either a military, intrigue, or court action. If the player chooses the court action, he ignores the Conan part of the instructions for the court+Conan die, and only chooses one of the options for the court part.

When selecting a wild die, a player may never choose an action that would have been available to him had he selected a different available fate die. This means, for example, that a player may not use a wild die to choose a military action if there is a military die or a military/intrigue die in the fate dice pool.




EXAMPLE: *At the beginning of the game, the Turan player uses an intrigue die to move two emissaries. The first emissary moves from Turan to Zamora, and must stop there, as that province is not friendly. The second emissary, who is also starting his movement in Turan, moves from Turan to Zamora. As that province has one friendly emissary already in it, the second emissary may continue, and moves from Zamora to Koth, where he stops, as that province is not friendly and does not have a friendly emissary in it.*

# CONTESTS

In *Age of Conan*, players invade provinces and fight battles with their armies, and form or break alliances using their emissaries. These actions are generally referred to as **contests**. There are two types of contests: the **military** contest and the **intrigue** contest.

A military contest may be either directed against a province or against the army of another player, while an intrigue contest is always directed against a province.

The military contest is explained in detail on page 15, and the intrigue contest is explained in detail on page 17. However, both types of contests follow the same general rules.

All contests have an attacker (the player starting the contest), and a defender. The defender may either be another player, or a neutral province, depending on the situation. If the defender is a neutral, uncontrolled province, the defense is handled by the player to the left of the attacker for the purposes of rolling dice and making any necessary decisions.

## The Contest Roll

Contests are resolved through contested dice rolls. Both players involved in a contest roll a specific number of dice (determined through various in-game factors) and compare their results. The player with the most successful die rolls (see below) wins the contest. This is referred to as the **contest roll**.

The contest dice are the dice used in all types of contests. There are six contest dice, but normally, no more than five may be rolled by any one player during a contest. There are certain special situations where the sixth die is used. However, the absolute maximum number of dice a player may roll during a contest is six.

During a contest, the attacker rolls first. Then the defender rolls.

If two players roll the same number of successful die rolls, then the defender wins the contest.

A successful die roll is determined by the results shown on the contest die after it has been rolled. Certain contest die results are successes, others are failures, and others are only successes under certain conditions.

| Contest Die Icon | Result |
|---|---|
|  | **Hit:** This result always counts as a success. |
|  | **Hit+Conan:** This result counts as one success for a non-Conan player, or two successes for the Conan player, if Conan is present in the province where the contest is taking place. |
|  | **Hit (Attacker):** This result only counts as a success if the player rolling the dice is the attacker. |
|  | **Shield:** This result normally counts as a failure. However certain cards or rules may modify it into a success. |
|  | **Axe:** This result normally counts as a failure. However certain cards or rules may modify it into a success. |
|  | **Miss (Blank Die Face):** This result always counts as a failure. |

EXAMPLE: *The attacker rolls three dice, with the following results:*



*The attacker did not play a card, so the axe does not count as a success. Therefore the attacker scores two successes.*

*The defender rolls two dice, with the following results:*



*He only scores one success, so the attacker wins.*

## Using Strategy Cards in Contests

When a player participates in a contest involving his army units, emissaries, or a province he controls, he can choose to play one strategy card from his hand before the contest dice are rolled.

Strategy cards modify the die rolls in contests by allowing players to count shield or axe results as successes instead of failures. If a player wishes to use a strategy card, he must play it before he rolls his dice in a contest.

Each strategy card can only be used to affect contests in certain provinces. When using a strategy card in a military contest, consult the four terrain icons on the bottom of the card. If an icon is not greyed out, it means the strategy card may be played to affect a military contest occurring on that terrain type. The terrain types military contests occur on is discussed in more detail in the military contest section on page 15.

When using a strategy card in an intrigue contest, consult the map on the card. One of the four colored areas on the map will be labeled "2-4," and another will be labeled "2-3." In a standard four-player game, the strategy card may be only used to affect an intrigue contest occurring in the area labeled "2-4." In a smaller two- or three-player game, the strategy card may be used to affect an intrigue contest occurring in either the area labeled "2-4" or the area labeled "2-3." In other words, in games with fewer players, a strategy card may be played in a larger number of provinces. Games with less than four players are covered in more detail on page 22.

After being played to modify a military or intrigue contest dice roll, a strategy card is discarded.

Exception: If the defender in a contest is a neutral province, the player rolling for the defender may not use a strategy card to modify his roll.

EXAMPLE: *In the previous example, if the defender had used the strategy card in the sidebar below (which has the shield icon, meaning he can count shields as successes) before rolling his dice, he would have rolled two successes instead of one. In that case, the defender would have tied with the attacker for the greatest number of successes, and the defender would have won the contest.*

## Strategy Cards

These cards are used by all players for two purposes. They are used when bidding to become the Conan player at the beginning of a new adventure, and they can be played to modify intrigue or military contests.



❶ The adventure rating is the value of the card when a player uses it to bid to become the Conan player.

❷ These symbols indicate which dice results count as successes when a player uses the card to modify an intrigue or military contest dice roll.

❸ During an intrigue contest in a two, three, or four-player game, this card may affect this area of the game board. In such a game, this card may be played in the North.

❹ During an intrigue contest in a two or three-player game, this card may affect this area of the game board. In a such a game, this card may also be played in Central Hyboria.

❺ During a military contest, this card may affect these terrain types on a campaign track. This card may be played to affect any military contest occurring on a plains terrain.

## Using Sorcery Tokens in Contests

Players may use sorcery tokens to reroll the results of their die rolls during intrigue or military contests. A player wishing to do so must discard one of his sorcery tokens (returning it to the communal sorcery token pile) immediately after rolling his contest dice. He may then reroll all of the dice he just rolled. (He must reroll *all* the dice, however. He cannot choose to reroll some and not others.)

All modifiers that applied to the first roll still apply to the reroll. A player cannot wait to use a sorcery token until after his opponent has rolled dice.

A player can only use one sorcery token per dice roll.

Exception: If the defender in a contest is a neutral province, the player rolling for the defender may not use a sorcery token.

EXAMPLE: *In this example, the defender only rolls one success and he decides to spend a sorcery token to reroll the dice. This time, he rolls two hits.*



*The defender now has two successes, as many as the attacker. The two players are tied for the most successes, so the defender wins the contest.*

## Removing Units, Control Markers, and Emissaries

During contests, players are often required to **remove** one of the army units, emissaries, or control markers involved in the contest. If a player is required to do this, he should take the unit, emissary, or control marker from the board and return it to his reserve pile.

## Conan in a Contest

Conan's presence in a province may influence any contests taking place there in a variety of ways.

### Conan Player

If the Conan player is involved in a contest in a province where Conan is present, the Conan player gets to add an additional die to the amount of contest dice he rolls (up to a maximum of six dice). Additionally, any hit+Conan results count as two successes, instead of one.

EXAMPLE: *Aquilonia, the current Conan player, is starting a military contest in the Pictish Wilderness. He has five army units and Conan is currently in the Pictish Wilderness. Due to the presence of Conan, Aquilonia rolls six dice, instead of five. He rolls and the dice show:*



*The total number of successes is four: one for the hit result, one for the hit (attacker) result, and two due to the hit+Conan result. The defending player only rolls three successes, and the Aquilonia player is victorious.*

### Conan in a Neutral Province

If a non-Conan player is attacking a neutral province where Conan is present, the defender (the player rolling for the neutral province) adds an additional die to the amount of contest dice he rolls (up to a maximum of six dice). Additionally, any hit+Conan results count as two successes, instead of one.

If two non-Conan players participate in an opposed contest roll in a neutral province where Conan is present, Conan does not affect either of their die rolls.

# THE MILITARY CONTEST

Military contests are used to represent the battles and sieges fought in the Hyborian Age. Players use military contests to subjugate neutral provinces, lay siege to enemy provinces, and destroy enemy armies.

### Types of Military Contests

There are three types of military contests:

- A **campaign** is fought when a player uses one of his armies to subjugate a neutral province.

- A **siege** is fought when a player uses one of his armies to attack an enemy province (a province controlled by another player).

Exception: Players may never attack the kingdom (home province) of another player.

- A **battle** is fought when the armies of two players confront each other in a neutral province.

All of the general rules for contests apply to these three types of military contests. In addition, there are specific rules for each type of military contest.

Note: Certain conditions determine how many dice each side rolls during a military contest. These conditions can change depending on the type of contest, and are explained fully in the contest descriptions on pages 15-17.

## Campaigns

When a player moves an army into a neutral province, he begins a campaign to subjugate it. A campaign represents a series of battles fought to conquer the province.

Each province has a campaign track. This is a series of icons located beneath the province rating, with each icon representing one of four terrain types: plains, woods, hills, and urban terrain. Each icon also represents a battle the invading army will have to fight, so the number of icons is the number of battles in the campaign.

When an army starts a campaign, place one of its units on the leftmost icon of the campaign track. Then resolve a military contest where the player with the army is the attacker, and the neutral province is the defender.

### Number of Dice Rolled

- The amount of dice the attacker rolls is equal to the number of units in the army he currently has in the neutral province.

- The amount of dice the defender rolls is equal to the province rating of the neutral province.

EXAMPLE: *A five-unit Aquilonian army is trying to subjugate neutral Argos. The attacker rolls five dice, and the defender only rolls four.*

### Determining Terrain

Each icon on the campaign track represents a specific type of terrain. This determines which strategy cards the attacker is allowed to play to aid him in his contest. During a campaign, the icon on the campaign track the attacking army unit is currently occupying is the terrain where the contest is taking place. Therefore, the icon must match one of the icons on the strategy card the attacking player is attempting to use.




EXAMPLE: *The Aquilonia army is campaigning in Ophir, on the first icon of the campaign track. The terrain icon is plains, so by playing the strategy card shown, Aquilonia is able to count shield or axe results in his contest roll as successes.*

### Presence of Raider Tokens

If a neutral contested province contains one or more raider tokens, the defender counts any axe results in his contest roll as successes. After each contest roll defending a neutral province containing raider tokens, discard one raider token from the province.

### Outcome of a Campaign Contest

- If the attacker wins, the attacker moves his army unit on the campaign track one icon to the right (unless it was already on the rightmost icon, see below). Then the attacker's turn ends. In a subsequent turn, the attacker may use a military action to continue his campaign and fight another contest in the province. This contest occurs in the same manner as the previous contest.

- If the attacker does not win the contest roll, he must remove one unit from the army in the contested province. The attacker does not move the army unit he has on the campaign track, and his turn ends. However, in a subsequent turn, the attacker may still use a military action to continue his campaign.

- If the army unit occupies the rightmost icon of the campaign track and the attacker wins the contest, the campaign is over and the province has been subjugated. The attacking player removes one unit from the army to place one fort in the province. The province is now friendly towards the attacking player. The player receives an amount of empire points equal to the province's province rating. (For more information on empire points, see "Winning the Game" on page 20.)

EXAMPLE: *The Aquilonia player rolls dice to subjugate Ophir, and rolls three successes (one hit, one hit/attacker, and one axe that is counted as a success thanks to a strategy card), while attacking with five units. The defender rolls three dice on behalf of neutral Ophir, but only rolls two hits, hence two successes. The Aquilonia player wins the contest, so he advances his army unit on Ophir's campaign track one icon to the right.*

### Forced March

When the contest roll is complete, normally the attacker's turn ends. However, the attacking player may decide to immediately continue his campaign by performing a **forced march**. An attacking player can perform a forced march whether he won the contest roll or not.

To perform a forced march, the attacker removes one of the units from the army he has in the neutral province. He may then immediately fight another military contest in the neutral province.

It is possible to perform a forced march more than once in the same turn.

EXAMPLE: *Continuing the previous example, after advancing to the second icon of the Ophir campaign track, Aquilonia decides to perform a forced march. He removes one unit from his campaigning army (reducing his army from five units to four units), then immediately starts a new contest. Once again he wins the roll, and Ophir is subjugated with a single, sweeping assault!*

# Sieges

When a player moves his army into an enemy province, a siege takes place. Sieges are mandatory – a player may never "move through" another player's province without attacking it.

When two players fight a siege, they participate in a series of military contest rolls with the player who initiated the contest by moving his army into the province as the attacker, and the player controlling the province as the defender.

## Number of Dice Rolled

- The attacker rolls an amount of contest dice equal to the number of army units in his attacking army.

- The defender rolls an amount of contest dice equal either to the number of his army units currently occupying the province, *or* the province rating of the province, whichever is higher.

## Determining Terrain and Using Cards and Sorcery

The first icon on the contested province's campaign track indicates on what type of terrain the siege takes place. This is used to determine which strategy cards may be used in the contest. In a siege, both players involved may use strategy cards, kingdom cards, and sorcery.

EXAMPLE: *The Turan player attacks Ophir with a five-unit army. Ophir is controlled by Aquilonia. The Aquilonian player has a two-unit army there, and Ophir has a province rating of 3. The defender takes the higher number, and will roll three dice. The attacker will roll five. The first icon on the Ophir campaign track is plains. Therefore, the defender and attacker may only use strategy cards with the plains icon.*

## Outcome of a Siege Contest Roll

- If the attacker wins the contest roll, the defender must remove one of his army units from the contested province. If there are no defending army units, the control marker (fort, tower, or city) must be removed instead.

Note: Although a city consists of a tower stacked on top of a fort, it is considered one control marker, not two.

- If the attacker loses the contest roll, he must remove one army unit from his army in the contested province.

At the end of the siege contest, the attacker chooses whether he wants to stop the siege and retreat to the province his army previously occupied. If he does so, he immediately moves his army back to that province. If he does not, the two players fight another siege contest. Successive contests continue until the attacker decides to retreat, the attacking army is completely removed, or the defending army and control marker are removed. The attacker's turn does not end until the siege is completed.

Note: The defender can never retreat from a siege.

## After the Siege

If all units in the defending army, as well as the defending control piece, are removed from a province, the province reverts to neutral status. A unit from the attacking army is placed on the leftmost icon of the province's campaign track. In a later turn, the attacking player can decide to start a campaign, or he may do so immediately by performing a forced march. Both options follow all the rules for a campaign.

If all units in the attacking army are removed or retreat, the defender remains in control of the contested province.

## "Crom, count the dead!"

If an attacker successfully completes a siege, he receives a "Crom, count the dead!" token. If the attacking army is completely removed or retreats, the defender receives a "Crom, count the dead!" token. These provide benefits at the end of the game.

# Battles

When a player moves an army into a neutral province containing another player's army, a battle ensues. Battles are mandatory – the armies of two players may never coexist in the same province.

When two players fight a battle, they participate in a series of military contest rolls, with the player who initiated the contest by moving his army into the province as the attacker, and the player whose army was already in the province as the defender.

## Number of Dice Rolled

- The attacker rolls an amount of contest dice equal to the number of units in his army.

- The defender rolls an amount of contest dice equal to the number of units in his army.

## Determining Terrain and Using Cards and Sorcery

The icon on the campaign track currently occupied by the defending army indicates the terrain used in the contest. This is used to determine which strategy cards may be used in the contest. In a battle, both players may use strategy cards, kingdom cards, and sorcery.

EXAMPLE: *The Turan army is campaigning in Koth, and is on the second step of the campaign track – woods. The Aquilonian player advances on Koth, and attacks the Turan army there. The terrain used, based on the position of the Turan army, is woods.*

## Outcome of a Battle Contest Roll

- If the attacker wins the contest roll, the defender removes a unit from his army participating in the battle.

- If the defender wins the contest roll, the attacker removes a unit from his army participating in the battle.

After the contest roll is completed, the attacker may choose to end the battle and retreat to the province his army previously occupied. If he does so, he immediately moves his army to that

province. If the attacker chooses not to retreat, the defender may choose to retreat and move his army to any adjacent friendly province. If there are no adjacent friendly provinces, he may not retreat.

If neither side retreats, new battle contests are fought until one combatant decides to retreat, or one army is completely removed. The attacker's turn does not end until the battle is completed.

### After the Battle

If the attacker eliminates the entire defending army or forces the defender to retreat, he places a unit from the attacking army on the leftmost icon of the campaign track. In a later turn, the attacker can decide to start a campaign, or he may do so immediately by performing a forced march. Both options follow all the rules for a campaign.

If the defender eliminates the entire attacking army or forces the attacker to retreat, his army remains in its current position on the campaign track. In a later turn, he may continue the campaign to subjugate the neutral province.

### "Crom, count the dead!"

If either player in a battle successfully forces the other player to remove all of his army units in the battle, or forces the other player to retreat, the victorious player receives a "Crom, count the dead!" token. These provide benefits at the end of the game.

# THE INTRIGUE CONTEST

Intrigue contests represent the diplomacy and political maneuvering between the Hyborian nations. Players use intrigue contests to convince neutral provinces to ally with their kingdoms, or to break alliances between enemy provinces and other players.

### Purposes of an Intrigue Contest

A player must have an emissary in a province where he wants to perform an intrigue contest. A player can never attempt an intrigue contest in a savage province, a home province, or a province that contains an enemy fort, city, or enemy army.

Intrigue contests may be used for two different purposes. A player can start an intrigue contest in a neutral province to ally the province with his kingdom, converting the province to a friendly province. A player can also start an intrigue contest in an enemy province, to return the province to neutral status.

The player who initiates an intrigue contest is the attacker, and the neutral province or the player who controls the targeted province is the defender. An intrigue contest consists of a single contest dice roll between the attacker and the defender.




### Use of Strategy Cards

A player may only use a strategy card if the area indicated on the card contains the province over which the intrigue contest is being made. In a four player game, this is the area labelled '2-4.' In a two- or three-player game, the card can be used in additional areas. See "Playing a Two or Three Player Game" on page 23 for more information.

EXAMPLE: *Turan starts an intrigue contest in Brythunia, in the North. The North is labeled "2-4" on the card, so Turan counts any shield results in the ensuing intrigue contest roll as successes.*

### Number of Dice Rolled

The number of contest dice the attacker in an intrigue contest rolls is equal to one, plus the number of provinces adjacent to the contested province that are either friendly to the attacker or contain a friendly emissary.

EXAMPLE: *Turan has an emissary in Koth, an emissary in Zamora, and controls Turan. He wants to start an intrigue contest in Zamora, so he will roll three dice: one, plus one for the emissary in Koth (which borders Zamora), plus one for his control of Turan (which also borders Zamora).*

The number of dice the defender rolls varies depending on whether the target is a neutral province or enemy province.

- If the province is neutral, the defender rolls a number of dice equal to the province's province rating.

- If the province is an enemy (to the attacker), the defender rolls a number of dice equal to the province's province rating plus one.

EXAMPLE: *Zamora normally has a rating of 4, so the defender rolls four dice. If Zamora becomes allied to the Turan player, Turan will roll five dice in any subsequent intrigue contests to defend his alliance with Zamora.*

### Outcomes of an Intrigue Contest Roll

If the attacker is attempting to establish an alliance with a neutral province and wins the contest roll, he removes his emissary (returning it to his reserve pile) and places one of his tower control markers on the province. The province is now friendly to him. The attacker also receives an amount of gold equal to the province's province rating from the communal gold pool. If the attacker loses the contest roll, the emissary remains in the neutral province and nothing happens.

If the attacker is attempting to cancel an enemy alliance and revert a province to neutral status, and wins the contest roll, the defender removes his tower control marker from the province. The province is now neutral, and the attacker's emissary remains in the neutral province. If the attacker loses the contest roll, he removes his emissary from the board.

# CONAN'S ADVENTURES

*Age of Conan* is set in the period of time when Conan the Barbarian is adventuring throughout the lands of Hyboria, before the crowning of the hero as the king of one of the Hyborian kingdoms. Conan's adventures determine how long the game lasts, and may affect the players as they strive to conquer Hyboria.

## The Adventure Track

As explained in the game setup section (see pages 8-9), each adventure card has a number in the lower right corner that determines its length. This number indicates the amount of adventure tokens randomly drawn from their opaque container and placed, faceup, on the appropriate spaces below the adventure deck on the game board. These tokens form the adventure track.

Adventure tokens represent Conan's achievements during his adventures – monsters killed, treasures stolen, and women who fall in love with the barbarian hero. Players receive these adventure tokens in two ways:

- The Conan player takes one adventure token from the track when he helps Conan successfully complete his adventure by moving Conan closer to the destination listed on the adventure card. See "The Conan Player's Turn" on page 10 for more information.

- Non-Conan players take one adventure token from the adventure track each time they use a court+Conan fate die.

Players keep the tokens they have accumulated facedown in front of them and do not reveal them to other players except in specific instances. The number of tokens in a player's possession, however, should be visible to all other players.

Exception: Players may look at their own tokens at any time.

## Completing Adventures and Starting New Adventures

When any player takes or discards the last remaining adventure token on the adventure track, that adventure ends. The player currently taking a turn finishes his turn and then the adventure is resolved.

### Adventure Tokens




Monsters Token




Treasures Token




Women Token

There are three types of adventure tokens: monsters tokens, treasures tokens, and women tokens. Each one has several components:

❶ The value of the token.

❷ These icons indicate that the token may be traded for an equal number of sorcery. For example, if an adventure token displays two of these icons, then the token may be traded for two sorcery.

❸ This icon indicates that the token may be traded for an equal number of gold. For example, if an adventure token displays one of these icons, then the token may be traded for one gold.

Whenever a player receives an adventure token, he may choose to immediately discard it to receive the amount of gold or sorcery shown on the token. The player can not decide to trade the token for gold or sorcery later in the game. The token is then removed from the game and is only put back in the adventure token container if, at any point in the game, the container is empty.

To resolve the adventure, check Conan's location. If Conan is in the same province as the destination marker, Conan has successfully completed the adventure. The Conan player draws one adventure token directly from the adventure token container as a reward. The player may keep the token (keeping its value and type secret from other players) or trade it for gold or sorcery as he chooses.

If Conan is not occupying the same province as the destination marker, he is immediately moved to that province. In this case, however, the Conan player does not receive an additional adventure token.

In both cases, the current adventure card is discarded and returned to the box. It will not be used again during the game. A new card is drawn from the adventure deck. Then, a number of adventure tokens equal the adventure length on the adventure card are drawn from the adventure token container, and placed on the adventure track. Afterwards, the players bid to assume the role of Conan player during the next adventure. This process is performed in the same manner as it was performed during game setup, described on page 9.

## Bid Tokens

A given player's used bid tokens cannot be used again until that player uses his "0" token in a bid. After the bid is completed, any player who used his "0" token retrieves all of his used bid tokens, except the "0" token, which remains discarded. Effectively, players will only be able to retrieve their discarded bidding tokens once, so they should use their "0" token wisely.

The only exception is the "3" token. If a player uses his "3" token to bid, he does not discard it after the bid phase is over. Effectively, a player will always be able to bid his "3" token.

If the completed adventure card was the last card in the adventure deck, the current age ends and the age change phase begins.

# THE AGE CHANGE PHASE

When the last of the four adventure cards in the adventure deck have been resolved, the age change phase occurs after the current player completes his turn.

There are two age change phases in *Age of Conan*, between the first and second ages and the second and third ages. Age change phases are opportunities for players to consolidate their gains, reap rewards for their accomplishments, and prepare themselves for the next age in the game.

The player who would have had the next turn takes the first player token. He will take the first turn when the age change phase is completed. Any remaining fate dice in the pool are left untouched, to be used when the game resumes.

The age change phase then proceeds through the following steps:

❶ Resolve raids.
❷ Collect gold and objective prizes.
❸ Build cities and raise troops.
❹ Spend gold.
❺ Assign artifacts and the Conan bonus card.
❻ Prepare the adventure deck.
❼ Refresh play-on-the-table cards.

All players should complete one step before any of them move on to the next, starting with the player holding the first player token and moving clockwise around the board.

## 1. Resolve Raids

At the beginning of the age change phase, players deal with any raider tokens that occupy their friendly provinces. Each player may choose to remove one of his army units in a province to discard all raider tokens in that province. A player may do this in any number of friendly provinces that have both friendly army units and raider tokens.

After eliminating raider tokens, each player counts how many raider tokens are still present in his friendly provinces and immediately loses an equal number of empire points. If the player does not have any empire points, he loses nothing. Empire points are discussed in greater detail on page 20.

Once this is complete, remove all raider tokens from the board.

**EXAMPLE:** *At the end of the first age, there are five raider tokens on the board. The kingdom of Aquilonia has two, one is in the Steppes, and there are two in Zamora. The kingdom of Aquilonia has two army units in Aquilonia. Aquilonia decides to remove one army unit from Aquilonia and so the two raider tokens are removed without effect. The Steppes are currently neutral, so the raider token is discarded without effect. Zamora is an ally of Turan, and Turan does not have army units within Zamora. Turan loses two empire points. Then all raider tokens are removed from Zamora.*

## 2. Receive Gold and Objective Prizes

During the age change phase, players capitalize on their conquests. Each player receives two gold for each of his tower or city control markers on the board, plus five gold to represent the wealth of his kingdom.

Then players check the objective cards currently in play. If a player has completed an objective, he receives the reward of empire points listed on the card. Each card states the requirements a player must meet to receive the reward. Certain cards have objectives that can be met by more than one player. If multiple players complete an objective, all receive the reward.

### Objective Cards

These cards represent the political and military goals of the Hyborian kingdoms. Each card lists an objective and a reward of empire points to the player or players who achieve it.




❶ Card title.

❷ The requirements a player must fulfill to receive the empire points reward on the card.

❸ The card's empire points reward.

If no player completes a given objective, the objective remains in play during the next age. Otherwise, the objective is discarded and a new objective is drawn and put into play in its place.

Note: Objectives may only be completed and resolved during an age change phase or at the end of the game, even if a player meets all of a given objective's requirements during the middle of an age. The player must meet all requirements when the objective is resolved.

## 3. Build Cities and Raise Troops

Players may now raise levies of new troops or improve their presence in the provinces they control. A player may place one army unit from his reserve pile in each friendly province containing a fort or city and his kingdom.

Instead of placing an army unit in a friendly province containing a fort, a player may choose to upgrade the fort to a city. If he chooses to do so, he places a tower control marker on top of the fort control marker, forming a city control marker.

Note: A player can upgrade a fort to a city, but it is not possible to upgrade a tower to a city.

## 4. Spend Gold

Players may now spend gold to buy additional emissaries, army units, and cards, according to the following table:

| Purchase | Cost |
|---|---|
| 1 emissary | 2 gold |
| 1 army unit | 2 gold |
| 1 kingdom and 1 strategy card | 2 gold |
| 1 strategy card | 1 gold |

If a player purchases units, he takes them from his reserve pile and places them in any friendly province or provinces. Remember, a player may never have more than five army units in the same province (except for his kingdom), but there is no limit to the number of emissaries that can occupy the same province. If a player purchases cards, he draws them from the appropriate deck and adds them to his hand. Players may purchase multiple figures and cards.

Spending gold is not mandatory. Gold can always be saved, to be used later.

## 5. Assign Artifacts and Conan Bonus Card

At the beginning of the game, the players randomly drew three powerful magic artifacts – the Sword of Atlantis, the Cobra Crown, and the Heart of Tammuz. Now, players compete to control these items. The players who previously controlled them give them up, and they are made available to all players through a competition.

Each player secretly selects any quantity of his adventure tokens in one category– monsters, treasures, or women. The category he chooses determines the artifact he is competing for.

Then, each player simultaneously reveals the tokens he has chosen. Each player tallies the values (the numbers on the adventure tokens) of all of his revealed tokens.

The Sword of Atlantis goes to the player with the highest total value in monsters tokens, the Cobra Crown goes to the player with the highest value in treasures tokens, and the Heart of Tammuz goes to the player with the highest value in women tokens. If there is a tie in any category, the corresponding artifact is not awarded to any player.

Once the artifacts are awarded, the revealed adventure tokens are returned to their owners' adventure token pools, facedown. No adventure tokens are spent or discarded during this process.

Players do not have to reveal all of their adventure tokens in a particular category, but only revealed tokens count towards winning the artifacts.

Note: It is entirely possible that one or more of the artifacts will not be given to a player during the age change phase. If this happens, the unassigned artifact should be set aside until the next age change phase.

During the age change phases between the first and second ages and second and third ages, after artifacts are assigned, the player with the lowest score in empire points receives the Conan bonus card. In case of a tie, the card goes to the tied player who has the lower number of adventure tokens. If there is a further tie, the card is not assigned. During the second and third ages, it is possible for a player to possess both an artifact and the Conan bonus card.

EXAMPLE: *Aquilonia decides to bid for the Sword of Atlantis with his three monsters adventure tokens. Turan wants the Heart of Tammuz, so he plans to bid his two women adventure tokens. Stygia also wants the Sword of Atlantis, so he plans to bid his two monsters adventure tokens. Every player shows the tokens. Aquilonia, with values of 1, 1, and 2, has a total of 4 in the monsters category. Turan, with 2 and 2, has a total of 4 in women, and Stygia, with 3 and 2, has a total of 5 in monsters. Turan, with no opponent in the bid, takes the Heart. Stygia takes the Sword, as his total is higher than Aquilonia's total. The Cobra Crown remains unassigned and will not be in play in the next age.*

*Finally, the Conan bonus card is assigned to Turan, who has 0 empire points, less than any other player.*

## 6. Create the Adventure Deck

Before the new age starts, players create a new adventure deck. This is performed in the same manner as when the adventure deck was created at the beginning of the game. Players select four adventure cards from those set aside at the beginning of the game and shuffle them into a new adventure deck. Then the deck is placed on the board and the top adventure card is drawn and placed into play. Players then participate in a round of bidding to become the new Conan player as normal.

## 7. Refresh Play-on-the-table Cards

All play-on-the-table cards in play are automatically refreshed (turned right side up) without players spending gold. They can now be used again. For more information on play-on-the-table cards, see page 22.

Then, play resumes, with the player possessing the first player token taking the first turn.

# WINNING THE GAME

To win the game, players must build the most powerful Hyborian kingdoms. The most powerful Hyborian kingdom is the kingdom with the most empire points at the end of the game.

## EMPIRE POINTS

Empire points are how players keep score in *Age of Conan*. During gameplay, players receive empire points in two ways:

- Whenever a player conquers a province through a military contest, he receives a number of empire points equal to the province's province rating.

- Whenever a player completes an objective, he receives the number of empire points listed on the card.

Note: Players do not lose empire points if a province they control is conquered by another player. In addition, if a player re-conquers a province they controlled earlier in the game, the player will again receive empire points for conquering the province.

Raider tokens can cause a player to lose empire points. A player's empire points total may never go below zero. If a player is required to lose more empire points than he has, he drops to zero empire points and the remaining losses are ignored.

Players keep track of empire points on the empire points track at the bottom of the game board. Each player has a counter that he places on the track. He moves the counter along the track so that it covers the number representing his current empire point score. If a player earns more than 40 empire points, he flips his marker to the "+40" side and continues counting from the "1" space on the empire points track.

When the game ends, additional empire points are awarded to players for accomplishing certain goals during the game.

## ENDING THE GAME

The game may end in two ways:

- When the fourth adventure of the third age is completed, the game ends when the current player completes his turn.

- At the end of any adventure of the third age (including the last one), the game ends if one player makes an attempt (successful or not) to crown Conan as the ruler of his kingdom (see "Crowning Conan," below).

## CROWNING CONAN

During the third age, the current Conan player can attempt to crown Conan as the ruler of his kingdom. This is a risky ploy, but the rewards in empire points if it succeeds makes victory much more likely.

If, at the end of a turn in which one of the adventures of the third age is concluded, Conan is in the home province of the Conan player, the Conan player may attempt to crown Conan king.

If the Conan player does not attempt to crown Conan when the adventure ends, and the adventure deck is not empty, a new card is drawn and a new bid for Conan takes place normally.

The Conan player attempts to crown Conan by announcing his attempt to crown Conan before the new adventure card is revealed (or before the end game scoring starts, if at the end of the fourth adventure). Players should give the Conan player a reasonable amount of time to declare his attempt before moving on.

The attempt to crown Conan follows the following steps:

❶ The Conan player chooses one category of adventure tokens (either monsters, treasures, or women).

❷ All players reveal all of their tokens in that category.

❸ Each player adds the combined *value* of all of all his tokens in that category and compares his total to the totals of each of the other players.

If the Conan player has the highest combined value in his selected category, he successfully crowns Conan as his kingdom's king. Consequently, he receives three additional empire points. In addition, that player is the only player who may receive empire points for having the most adventure tokens in each of the three categories (see Final Scoring, below). These benefits do not provide a guaranteed win, but can be a hefty bonus.

However, if another player's combined value in the chosen category equals or exceeds the Conan player's value, the attempt to crown Conan king fails. Conan mocks the Conan player for failing, capriciously slaying the ruler of the kingdom before disappearing. The Conan player is eliminated from the game and automatically loses. The remaining players tally up their empire point totals and determine who wins from among them.

In either case, the game is over, and players calculate their final scores.

# Final Scoring

No matter how the game ends, all players calculate their final scores to determine who wins.

Exception: If the Conan player attempted to crown Conan and failed, he does not calculate his final score, as he has already been eliminated from the game.

To calculate the final scores, players must first resolve the effects of any raider tokens as if they were participating in an age change phase, (see "Resolve Raids" on page 19). All players update their empire points scores accordingly. Then:

- Each player receives a number of empire points equal to the combined total of the province ratings of all provinces where he has forts or cities. (This in addition to the empire points a player received when he conquered the province originally.)

- Each player receives an amount of gold equal to the combined ratings of all provinces where he has towers or cities.

- Players check to see if they have accomplished any objectives currently in play, as if they were participating in an age change phase. Players receive empire points for any objectives they have accomplished, and update their scores accordingly.

After these scores are taken into account, players determine which players receive the following bonuses and update their scores accordingly. Each bonus has a "Highest" column and a "Tied for Highest" column. Most of the bonuses are awarded to players who have the most of something, so if two players are tied, neither receives the bonus listed in the "Highest" column. Instead, both receive the bonus listed in the "Tied for Highest" column.

| Circumstance | Highest | Tied for Highest |
|---|---|---|
| Richest Kingdom | +3 | +1 |
| "Crom, count the dead!" | +3 | +1 |
| Crowning Conan | +3 | – |
| Adventure Tokens Dominance | +5 each | +2 each |

- **Richest Kingdom**: The player with the most gold receives this bonus.

- **"Crom, count the dead!"**: The player with the most "Crom, count the dead!" tokens receives this bonus.

- **Crowning Conan**: A player who successfully crowns Conan as the ruler of his kingdom receives this bonus.

- **Adventure Tokens Dominance**: A player with the highest combined value of adventure tokens in one of the three categories (monsters, treasures, or women) receives this bonus. Since there are three categories, this effectively counts as three separate bonuses that may be won by different players or by the same player.

EXAMPLE: *It is the end of the third age. No player attempted to crown Conan, and now it's time to calculate the final scores. Adding up the combined values of adventure tokens, Aquilonia has a total of 15, 12, and eight in monsters, treasures, and women, respectively. Turan has totals of 12, 12, and 11. Lastly, Stygia has sums of 13, 10, and 12.*

*Aquilonia, with 15, has the highest total in monsters. There is a tie between Aquilonia and Turan for treasures, with 12 each. Stygia has the highest total in women, with 12. So, Aquilonia receives seven (+5 and +2) empire points, Stygia receives five, and Turan only receives two.*

If the game ends because a player successfully crowns Conan, **only the player who crowns Conan is awarded bonuses for adventure tokens**. Any other player who would otherwise receive such a bonus does not receive it. However, this does not mean the player who crowned Conan receives all bonuses automatically. If another player would have received one of the bonuses, nobody gets it.

EXAMPLE: *If, in the example described above, Aquilonia successfully crowned Conan, he would be the only one to receive the bonuses. He would receive seven empire points, in addition to the three empire points for crowning Conan (a total of 10 empire points). The other two players would not receive any empire points bonuses from their adventure tokens.*

**The player with the highest score in empire points after all bonuses are added is the winner. In case of a tie, the player with the highest total number of adventure tokens is the winner. If those are tied as well, then the game ends in a tie.**

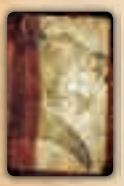
# OTHER RULES

These are some of the other rules for various components in *Age of Conan* as well as rules governing two- and three-player games.

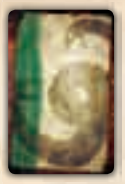
## KINGDOM CARDS

In the game, there are two types of cards that provide players with special abilities and the ability to modify military and intrigue contests. The first type is strategy cards, which have been discussed earlier in this book (see page 14). The second type is kingdom cards.

Kingdom cards are divided into four separate decks, one for each kingdom. Each deck is marked with its kingdom's symbol and color.


**Aquilonia**


**Hyperborea**


**Stygia**


**Turan**

### Drawing Kingdom Cards

Players can draw kingdom cards from their kingdom decks in two ways. The first way is one of the options a player can select when taking a court action during his turn. When a player chooses this option, he draws one kingdom card and one strategy card. Players can also spend two gold during an age change phase to draw one kingdom card and one strategy card.

If a player ever draws the last kingdom card from his deck, he shuffles all the kingdom cards he has discarded to form a new kingdom deck.

There are three different types of kingdom cards: play-on-the-table, event, and instant cards.

#### Play-on-the-table cards




These cards represent special characters, items, and elite troops available to a kingdom. Each play-on-the-table card, once played, remains in play unless a player is forced to discard it for some reason.

Each play-on-the-table card has a cost, indicated by the gold icon and number in the lower right corner of the card. When a player plays a play-on-the-table card from his hand, he must pay its cost by spending an equivalent amount of gold. Play-on-the-table cards may only be played at the beginning of a player's turn, although a player may play multiple cards if he has enough gold.

When the player plays a play-on-the-table card, he places it faceup on the table in front of him. The player may now use the card in the manner specified by the card's game text. However, he is not required to use the card immediately.

When a player uses a play-on-the-table card, he turns it upside down (indicating it has been used). The card cannot be used again until it is refreshed. If a player wants to refresh a card, at the beginning of a future turn, he spends an amount of gold equal to the cost of the card as if he were playing it from his hand. The card is then turned right side up and is ready to be used again.

All play-on-the-table cards are automatically refreshed during the age change phase without players being required to spend gold.

EXAMPLE: *At the beginning of his turn, Aquilonia spends two gold to play the Bossonian Archers card from his hand. Later, during a military contest, he uses the archers to add one success to his total roll, so the card is turned upside down. In a later turn, the player may pay two gold to refresh the card, so it can be used again.*

#### Event cards




Event cards represent a special occurrence or item providing a one-time bonus to a player's kingdom.

A player can use the court action from a fate die to play an event card (this is one of the listed options of a court action, see page 11). A player can only use event cards during his turn. The exact use and effect of the card is explained in the card's game text.

Event cards are placed in a player's kingdom card discard pile after use. The discard pile is where players keep their discarded kingdom cards until it is time to reshuffle them and form a new kingdom deck.

#### Instant cards




Instant cards may be played without spending gold or using a court die.

The card's text specifies the times when it can be played. Normally they are played during a player's turn to give him a special ability. However, some instant cards may be played during another player's turn. The exact use and effect of the card is explained in the card's game text.

Exception: A player may only use an instant card during another player's turn to modify a contest the player with the instant card is involved in.

Instant cards are placed in a player's discard pile after use.

## TWO- AND THREE-PLAYER GAMES

Throughout this rulebook, the rules have been described as if four players are playing the game. Most rules remain the same even when there are only two or three players. However, some rules change slightly, specifically, some aspects of game setup, and the way strategy cards work in intrigue contests.

In a two or three player game, it is suggested that one player be Aquilonia. Depending on the size of the game, the following matchups are recommended for game balance: Aquilonia and Turan in a two-player game, and Aquilonia, Turan, and Stygia in a three-player game.

Note: These matchups are not required, and players may certainly experiment with others.

## The Game Board

When the game has less than four players, *Age of Conan* is played on a reduced board. The areas in play depend on which kingdoms are being used.

- Central Hyboria is always in play.

- The East is in play only if Turan is being used.

- The South is in play only if Stygia is being used.

- The North is in play only if Hyperborea is being used.

Conan and emissaries may still enter provinces that are not in play. However, an army may never enter a province that is not in play, and no contests may take place in a province that is not in play. As a result, a province that is not in play will never become a friendly province.

## Strategy Cards




Strategy cards are used differently in games with less than four players. In a four-player game, when players use strategy cards during intrigue contests, they are only able to use them if the province where the intrigue contest is occurring is located in the area on the card marked with the "2-4" label.

In a two- or three-player game, players may use strategy cards to affect intrigue contests occurring in a province located in the area labeled "2-4," as well as in the area labeled "2-3." Strategy cards have been made more versatile in smaller games, because certain areas of the map are not in play.

Note: All other rules governing the use of strategy cards in intrigue contests apply in smaller games.

## Artifact Cards

In a two- or three-player game, artifacts are assigned and bid for as normal. Any non-assigned or unawarded artifacts are set aside until the next age change phase. Then players can bid on them again.

A GAME BY ROBERTO DI MEGLIO, MARCO MAGGI & FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

# AGE OF CONAN
## THE STRATEGY BOARD GAME


GAME DESIGN ROBERTO DI MEGLIO, MARCO MAGGI & FRANCESCO NEPITELLO

ART DIRECTION & GRAPHIC DESIGN FABIO MAIORANA

PRODUCTION ROBERTO DI MEGLIO & FABRIZIO ROLLA

COVER ART J.P. TARGETE

CONCEPT ART MATTEO MACCHI

PHOTOS CHRISTOPH CIANCI

ENGLISH EDITION EDITING JOHN GOODENOUGH & SAM STEWART

ENGLISH EDITION LAYOUT SAM STEWART

ENGLISH EDITION EXECUTIVE DEVELOPER JEFF TIDBALL

ENGLISH EDITION PUBLISHER CHRISTIAN T. PETERSEN

PLAYTESTING: MAURO ADORNA, AMADO ANGULO, MARKUS BAAR, MARIO BARBATI, FRANCESCO BAREA, KRISTOFER BENGTSSON, TOR BIEKER, ROBERTO BUSSETTI, PIERO CIONI, CLUB TREEMME, DEREK COON, ULRICH CZARNETZKI, KEN DOBYNS, ANNA FAVA, GIULIANO FASSI, DENIS FISCHER, ISABELLE GALANT, MARCO HAMMERL, DAVID HASSELBACHER, SABRINA HEESEN, PAUL HELDRUP, ROGER JOHANSSON, ANDREAS JOSEFSSON, MATT KINCAID, ERICH KRAGEL, JUTTA KRÖHNERT, MICHAEL KRÖHNERT, JÖRG KRISMANN, KAI KRÜCKEL, CARMINE LAUDIERO, JACOB LEUNER, ANDREA LIGABUE, GIACOMO MARCHI, DAVID MORSE, MICHELE NENZI, GIULIANO NEPITELLO, LUCA PANSECCHI, NILS ROPERTZ, CIRO SACCO, NICOLA SANTARELLO, MICHAEL SCHLEPPHORST, JOST SCHWIDER, ANDREW STAINTON, JESPER SÖRENSSON, JIMMY STRÖMBERG, THORSTEN TEUBER, DAVIDE TRIVELLATO, ANDREW WEINER, MICHELE ZANNI.

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