

CARPE ASTRA

Seize the Stars

By Ted Cheatham
and Jackson Pope

Bribe.
Slander.
Whatever it takes
to claim the Galactic Throne.



Components

5 single hex tiles:



4 character tiles



and one Senate tile

15 double hex 'Guild Tiles'
- featuring two guilds:



example front design
(Politicians & Engineers)



27 Event cards featuring
one or two guilds



35 Network cards featuring
two or three guilds



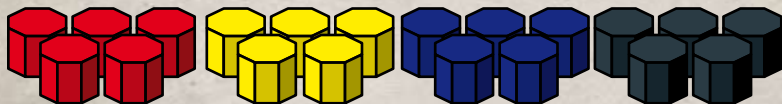
35 Slander cards featuring
two or three guilds



4 rules cards



4 character cards



20 agent markers (wooden octagonal prisms), five each in four colours



36 triangular support tokens, six for each guild



49 money tokens (credits)

Background

Ten thousand years in the future, humanity has claimed the stars - but all is not well. The Emperor is weak, and without strong guidance the Empire is crumbling. Powerful guilds within the empire are squabbling, positioning themselves for their own gain. If the Empire is to survive, it needs a strong leader - you've decided that means you! You must build a power-base throughout the Empire by networking with important guilds: the military, traders, priests, engineers, settlers and politicians. Once you have their support, you can claim the throne. Time is running out though and others also struggle for the throne. You must place your agents within the guilds to capitalise on your actions, while slandering your opponents to stop them in their tracks. Be careful however, as each slander you receive reduces your support.

A series of events will occur throughout the course of the game - take advantage of them for further gain. At the end of the game the player with the most support takes control of the Galactic Throne.

Aim of the Game

You play one of four powerful characters within the Empire, vying to overthrow the Emperor. Your aim is to build the most support among the elite of the Empire during the ten rounds of the game, while slandering your opponents to reduce their power.

The game takes place on a board assembled from tiles representing factions within the six powerful guilds. Each player will try to infiltrate the guilds, placing their agents in factions to gain support. Only one player can infiltrate a faction at a time and each double tile represents two factions that are strongly opposed to each other, so you cannot infiltrate both factions on a tile simultaneously, as they will not deal with you if you are dealing with their enemy.

Throughout the game the six guilds will be represented by the logos shown here. On the cards, their names will also be present.



The Military
Red crosshair



Traders
Yellow credit



Priests
Blue scarab



Engineers
Green cogs



Settlers
Orange world



Politicians
Black handshake

Setup

- Shuffle the Event cards, then deal ten face down in a line alongside the gaming area; these constitute the event timeline which describes what is happening in the Empire during the game. Turn the second and third cards face up - these represent forthcoming events that will boost the power of particular guilds. **Note:** pay no attention to the Immediate Event symbols (a yellow triangle with an exclamation mark in it), on the Event cards during setup.
- Determine which player is which character. Each player takes the five agent markers, the character card and the rules card in their character's colour and five credits. They place one agent marker on their character tile (their headquarters).
- Place the remaining credit tokens in a supply pile near the gaming area.
- Shuffle the Guild Tiles (comprising of two guild hexes), then lay them out randomly as shown in the diagram below for the appropriate number of players, leaving a small gap between tiles:



3-Player Layout

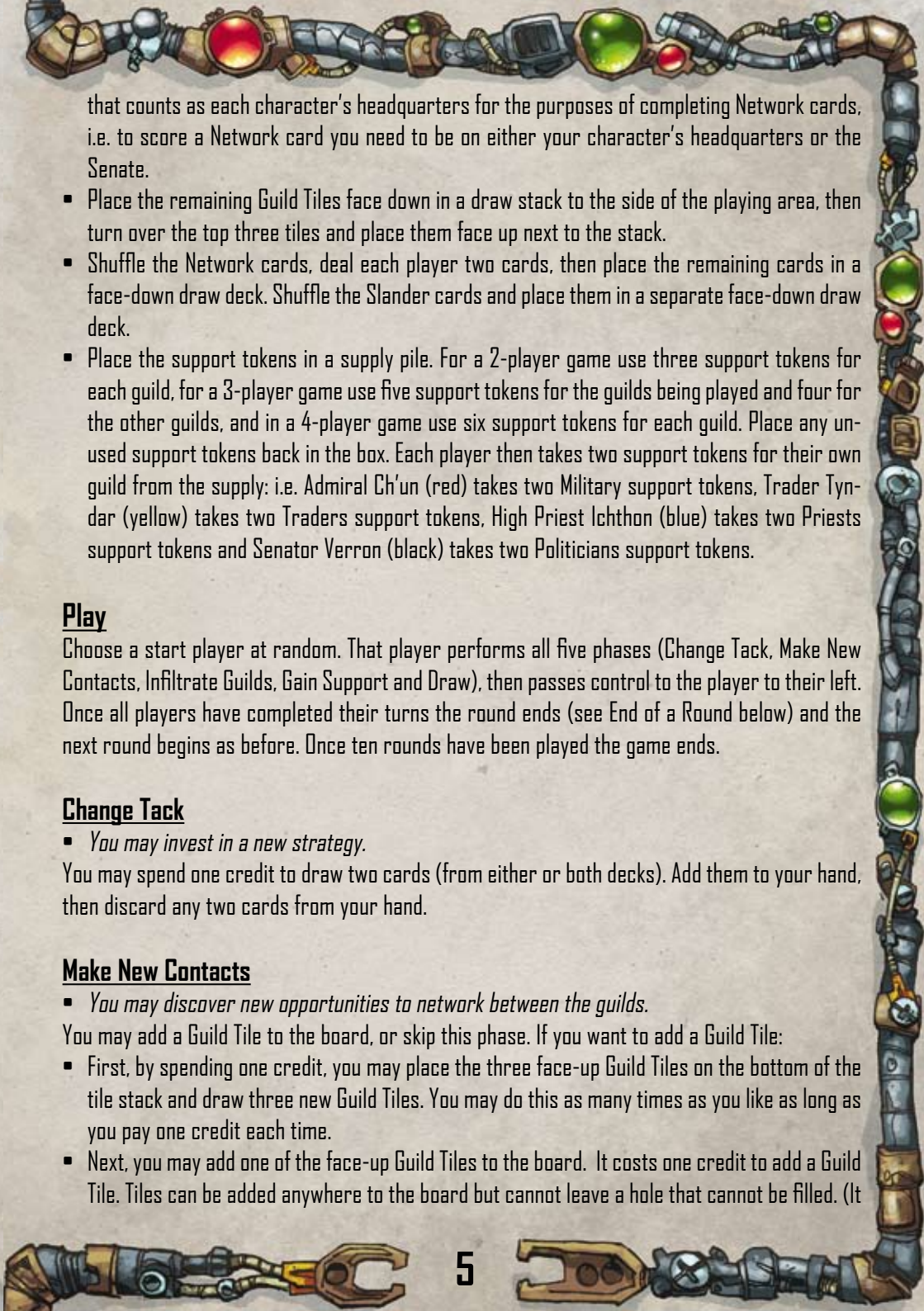


2-Player Layout



4-Player Layout

- Place the appropriate character tiles (bearing a single agent marker of the same colour) where a character tile is shown and a random Guild Tile (guild side up) everywhere that a double hex is shown. The Senate tile used in the three- and four-player game is a special tile



that counts as each character's headquarters for the purposes of completing Network cards, i.e. to score a Network card you need to be on either your character's headquarters or the Senate.

- Place the remaining Guild Tiles face down in a draw stack to the side of the playing area, then turn over the top three tiles and place them face up next to the stack.
- Shuffle the Network cards, deal each player two cards, then place the remaining cards in a face-down draw deck. Shuffle the Slander cards and place them in a separate face-down draw deck.
- Place the support tokens in a supply pile. For a 2-player game use three support tokens for each guild, for a 3-player game use five support tokens for the guilds being played and four for the other guilds, and in a 4-player game use six support tokens for each guild. Place any unused support tokens back in the box. Each player then takes two support tokens for their own guild from the supply: i.e. Admiral Ch'un (red) takes two Military support tokens, Trader Tyn-dar (yellow) takes two Traders support tokens, High Priest Ichthon (blue) takes two Priests support tokens and Senator Verron (black) takes two Politicians support tokens.

Play

Choose a start player at random. That player performs all five phases (Change Tack, Make New Contacts, Infiltrate Guilds, Gain Support and Draw), then passes control to the player to their left. Once all players have completed their turns the round ends (see End of a Round below) and the next round begins as before. Once ten rounds have been played the game ends.

Change Tack

- *You may invest in a new strategy.*

You may spend one credit to draw two cards (from either or both decks). Add them to your hand, then discard any two cards from your hand.

Make New Contacts

- *You may discover new opportunities to network between the guilds.*

You may add a Guild Tile to the board, or skip this phase. If you want to add a Guild Tile:

- First, by spending one credit, you may place the three face-up Guild Tiles on the bottom of the tile stack and draw three new Guild Tiles. You may do this as many times as you like as long as you pay one credit each time.
- Next, you may add one of the face-up Guild Tiles to the board. It costs one credit to add a Guild Tile. Tiles can be added anywhere to the board but cannot leave a hole that cannot be filled. (It

must be possible to fill any hole with Guild Tiles).



- After adding the tile, turn over the top Guild Tile of the stack to replace the chosen tile.

Infiltrate Guilds

- *You may use your agents to infiltrate new guilds.*

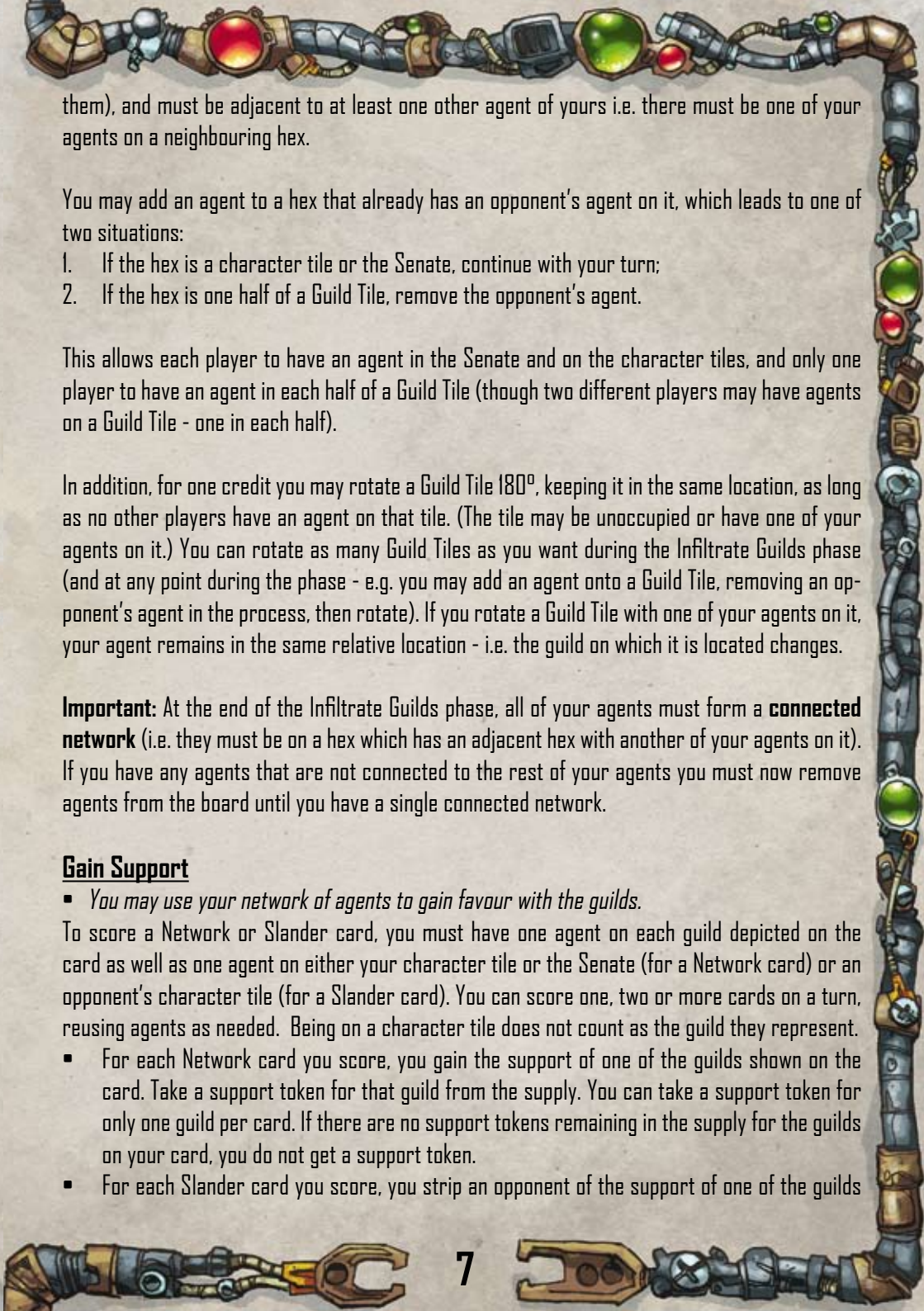
Place your agent markers onto hexes where you don't currently have an agent; they can move from off the board or from another hex. Your first two moves are free; after that you must pay one credit for each additional move you wish to make. Agents must be placed on a character tile, the Senate or one half of a Guild Tile (you cannot occupy both halves of a Guild Tile - only one of



Potential new black agent

Not connected





them), and must be adjacent to at least one other agent of yours i.e. there must be one of your agents on a neighbouring hex.

You may add an agent to a hex that already has an opponent's agent on it, which leads to one of two situations:

1. If the hex is a character tile or the Senate, continue with your turn;
2. If the hex is one half of a Guild Tile, remove the opponent's agent.

This allows each player to have an agent in the Senate and on the character tiles, and only one player to have an agent in each half of a Guild Tile (though two different players may have agents on a Guild Tile - one in each half).

In addition, for one credit you may rotate a Guild Tile 180°, keeping it in the same location, as long as no other players have an agent on that tile. (The tile may be unoccupied or have one of your agents on it.) You can rotate as many Guild Tiles as you want during the Infiltrate Guilds phase (and at any point during the phase - e.g. you may add an agent onto a Guild Tile, removing an opponent's agent in the process, then rotate). If you rotate a Guild Tile with one of your agents on it, your agent remains in the same relative location - i.e. the guild on which it is located changes.

Important: At the end of the Infiltrate Guilds phase, all of your agents must form a **connected network** (i.e. they must be on a hex which has an adjacent hex with another of your agents on it). If you have any agents that are not connected to the rest of your agents you must now remove agents from the board until you have a single connected network.

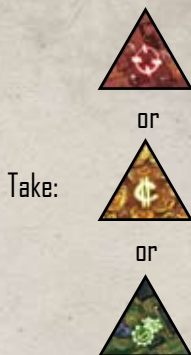
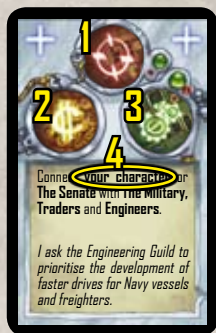
Gain Support

- *You may use your network of agents to gain favour with the guilds.*

To score a Network or Slander card, you must have one agent on each guild depicted on the card as well as one agent on either your character tile or the Senate (for a Network card) or an opponent's character tile (for a Slander card). You can score one, two or more cards on a turn, reusing agents as needed. Being on a character tile does not count as the guild they represent.

- For each Network card you score, you gain the support of one of the guilds shown on the card. Take a support token for that guild from the supply. You can take a support token for only one guild per card. If there are no support tokens remaining in the supply for the guilds on your card, you do not get a support token.
- For each Slander card you score, you strip an opponent of the support of one of the guilds

shown on the card. Pick an opponent whose character tile has your agent on it and pick one guild depicted on that Slander card. Return one of the opponent's support markers for that guild to the supply. **Important:** You may pay one credit to the bank to keep that support token for yourself instead of returning it.



Take:

If you slander an opponent during your turn, you must remove the agent from the opponent's character tile at the end of your turn, as the agent has been found out and assassinated. The agent marker can be used again next turn as a new agent will be hired. The agent can be used to score multiple slanders during a single turn before being assassinated at the end of the turn.

Once a card has been scored, discard it to a face-up pile next to the deck of the same type of cards, either Network or Slander.

Note: If you score a card that matches the current event, gaining you credits, those credits are gained immediately, and can then be spent to keep a token slandered off an opponent using that card. Also, you can score cards in any order, e.g. you could score a Slander (assuming you had an agent on an opponent's character tile), returning a support token you want to the supply, then score a Network (assuming you have both a suitable card and an agent on your character tile or The Senate), taking that support token from the supply for yourself.

If you do not score any cards during the turn, take two credits from the supply.

Draw

At the end of your turn, if you have zero or one cards in your hand, draw Network or Slander



cards until you have two cards in your hand. You choose whether to draw from the network or slander decks or both decks.

If you are allowed to draw extra cards into your hand due to the current event, you then draw the extra card(s) from either deck.

If either deck runs out, reshuffle the appropriate discard pile.

End of a Round

Once all players have completed all five phases of their turns, the round ends. Remove the current round's Event card from the game, then reveal the next face-down Event card. (In turns 2 - 8 there will be three face-up Event cards).

 If the **newly revealed** card features an Immediate Event symbol (a yellow triangle with an exclamation mark in it), then the middle of the three face-up cards is replaced with a new card from the deck - this is a surprise event, for which no character was able to plan. This is the only time that the Immediate Event symbol has an effect; ignore it during the Setup Phase and when revealing a new event as the result of an Immediate Event. See page 12 for an example of the end of a round.

The start player now begins another round.

Event Cards

Each turn (except for the first) has an event card describing an event which is happening in the empire, an event that you can take advantage of to gain greater favour with particular guilds. Each Event card lists one or two guilds and an advantage if you score them this turn. Both Network and Slander cards gain the advantage shown, as long as they feature the listed guilds. The three types of Event cards are:



If you score Network or Slander cards featuring either of two guilds this turn, you receive one credit for every guild featured. E.g. if the two guilds are **The Military** and **Traders**, and you score these three cards this turn - **The Military** & **Expansionists**; **The Military** & **Traders** and **Traders**, **Priests** and **Expansionists** - you would receive four credits.



If you score Network or Slander cards featuring the guild this turn, you receive two credits for every card featuring that guild. E.g. if the guild is **The Military** and you score two slanders this turn - **The Military & Traders** and **The Military & Politicians** - you would receive four credits.



If you score Network or Slander cards featuring the guild this turn, you receive an extra card for every guild featured. E.g. if the guild is **Traders**, and you score three cards this turn - **The Military & Expansionists**; **The Military & Traders** and **Traders, Priests & Expansionists** - you would draw two extra cards in the draw phase, even if you already have two or more cards.

Money Tokens (Credits)

Money is a tie-breaker at the end of the game. In addition, you can use your credits to:

- pay to draw extra cards in the 'Change Tack' phase
- clear the face-up Guild Tiles or purchase a new Guild Tile in the 'Make New Contacts' phase,
- buy extra moves or pay to rotate a Guild Tile in the 'Infiltrate Guilds' phase, or
- keep the support token you have removed from an opponent by playing a Slander card.

You earn money in two ways:

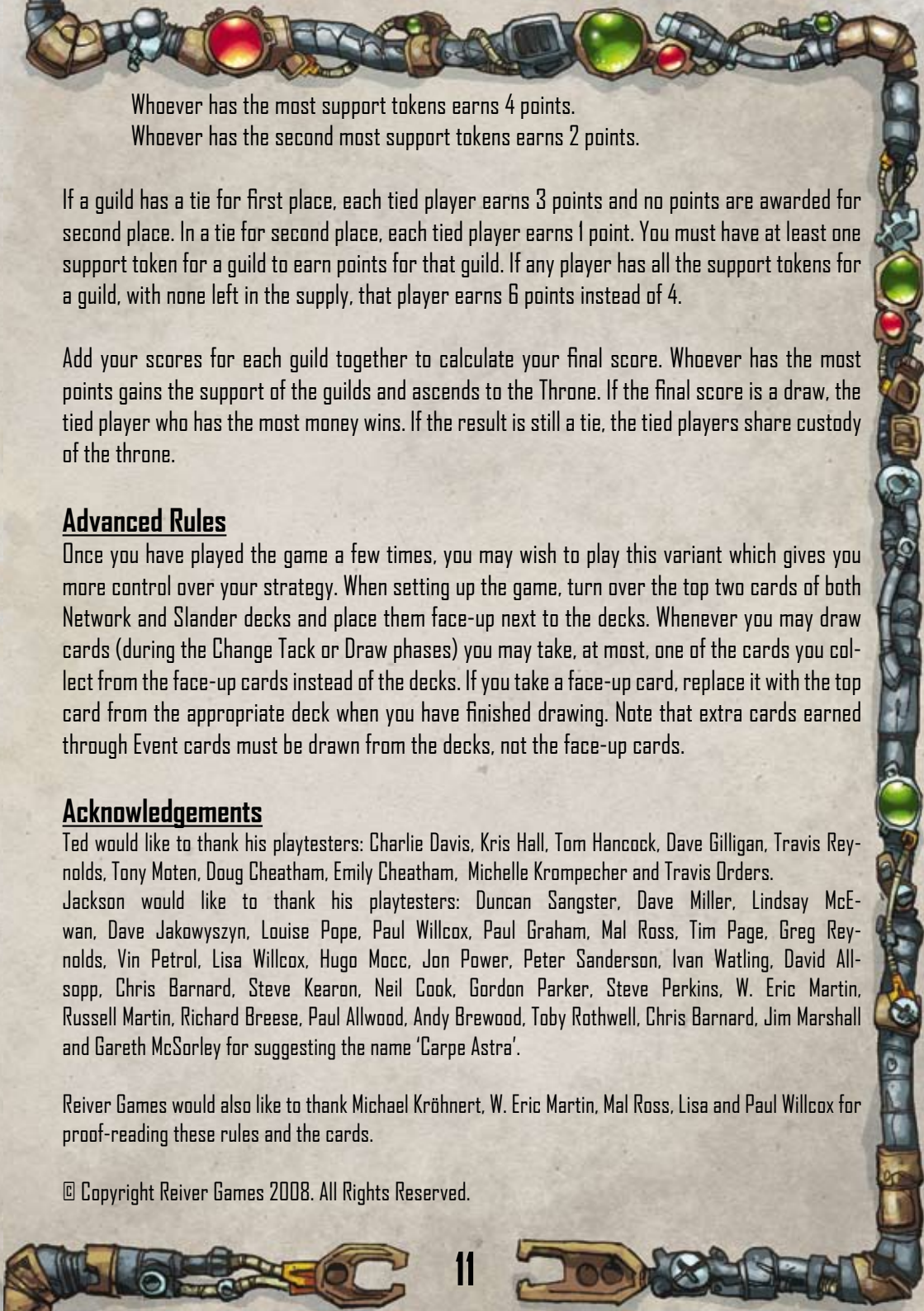
- If you do not score any cards on your turn, you take two credits.
- When you score cards that meet event requirements, you take the appropriate number of credits.

End of the Game

The game ends when the tenth round is complete - i.e. when the final Event card is removed from the game.

Winning the Game

For each guild, players calculate their score as follows:



Whoever has the most support tokens earns 4 points.
Whoever has the second most support tokens earns 2 points.

If a guild has a tie for first place, each tied player earns 3 points and no points are awarded for second place. In a tie for second place, each tied player earns 1 point. You must have at least one support token for a guild to earn points for that guild. If any player has all the support tokens for a guild, with none left in the supply, that player earns 6 points instead of 4.

Add your scores for each guild together to calculate your final score. Whoever has the most points gains the support of the guilds and ascends to the Throne. If the final score is a draw, the tied player who has the most money wins. If the result is still a tie, the tied players share custody of the throne.

Advanced Rules

Once you have played the game a few times, you may wish to play this variant which gives you more control over your strategy. When setting up the game, turn over the top two cards of both Network and Slander decks and place them face-up next to the decks. Whenever you may draw cards (during the Change Tack or Draw phases) you may take, at most, one of the cards you collect from the face-up cards instead of the decks. If you take a face-up card, replace it with the top card from the appropriate deck when you have finished drawing. Note that extra cards earned through Event cards must be drawn from the decks, not the face-up cards.

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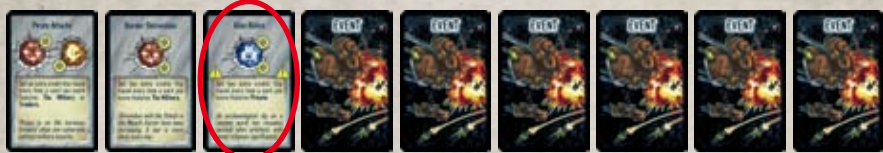
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Example End of a Round

First remove the event card for the current round (in the first round it isn't revealed):



Then reveal the third card from the left:



If the newly revealed card has the Immediate Event symbol, replace the second card with a new one from the deck:



Scoring Example

Calculate your score with each guild and then add the guild scores together.

				Supply	Notes
	$4 \times \triangle = 4$	0	$1 \times \triangle = 2$	0	Most earns 4 points, second place earns 2 points
	0	$4 \times \triangle = 4$	0	$1 \times \triangle$	Most earns 4 points, no second place awarded
	0	0	$5 \times \triangle = 6$	0	All the tokens earns 6 points
	$2 \times \triangle = 3$	$2 \times \triangle = 3$	0	0	Tie for most earns each tied player 3 points
	$2 \times \triangle = 4$	$1 \times \triangle = 1$	$1 \times \triangle = 1$	0	Most earns 4 points, tied for 2nd place earn 1 point
	$1 \times \triangle = 3$	$1 \times \triangle = 3$	$1 \times \triangle = 3$	$1 \times \triangle$	Tie for most earns each tied player 3 points
	14 points	11 points	12 points		Admiral Ch'un wins